

Col. Ingraham's Great Sea Story, "FREELANCE!" Opening Chapters in This Number!

The Star Journal

Entered at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., as Second Class Matter.

N. ORR, N.Y.

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Vol. X.

E. F. Beadle,
William Adams,
David Adams,

PUBLISHERS.

NEW YORK, JULY 26, 1879.

TERMS IN ADVANCE.

One copy, four months, \$1.00
One copy, one year, . 3.00
Two copies, one year, . 5.00

No. 489

THE UNDISCOVERED SHORES.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

The roving winds blow landward
And bring the breath of blossoms
To us, from that strange country
We dream about so much.

The breath of sweetest blossoms
That baird in one long summer
Where some never smelt,

And no one growth old.

Sometimes, in dreamy moments,
I fancy that I see them—
With sunshine all about them—

The undiscovered shores.

I stretch my hands out, yearning
To touch the deathless flowers,

And drink the fragrance of fountains

So near, yet far away.

So near, that in those moments
The drooping of an eyelid

Brings them before my vision

To glad my weary eyes.

So far I cannot find them—

As sweetings of earth are

For ever on beyond us—

And only seen in dreams.

Oh shores that haunt my fancies
In sleeping or in waking—

Bright with the bloom of summer

For ever, ever more,

You fill me with strange longing

As, in the cold, white winter,

We dream of roses' fragrance

And long for summer days.

Oh, mystery!—mystery!

Whom weary with its troubles

The heart, by some strange magic,

Can bring your shores in sight.

And listening to your voices,

We rest, and so grow stronger

To bear life's crosses onward

Until the day is done.

Then, when the tide sets seaward,

Our souls will cast their moorings

And sail out to discover

The shores of endless peace.

Freelance,

The Cavalier Corsair;

OR,

THE WAIF OF THE WAVE.

A Nautical Romance of the Early Years of the Nineteenth Century.

BY COL. PRENTISS INGRAHAM,
AUTHOR OF "THE CRETAN ROVER," "MERLE,
THE MUTINEER," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

A GRAVE BETWEEN THEM.

LIFE a flood of silver light the moon's rays
streamed down from a cloudless sky, and
bathed land and sea in its halo of dreamy luster.
The winds had died away, and the waves
broke with muffled sound upon the pebbly beach,
while in the background the dark line of forest
echoed to the shrill notes of songsters—the
mock-birds of the South, trilling forth their
melody, as though in joyful admiration of the
calm beauty of the scene.

Along the curving shores of the Gulf, here
and there gleam from the magnolia forests, the
snowy walls of a plantation villa, surrounded
upon three sides by acres, tilled by
the dark-hands of the slave, whose white
cottages are visible in the distance.

In front of these homesteads, the abodes of
wealthy and aristocratic Southerners, lying at
anchor upon the waters of the Gulf, are visible
yachts of various sizes and rig, but with
sails furled for the night, and no one visible
upon their decks, for the world seems to have
sunk to sleep under the calm influence of the
hour.

Along the shore, and in front of the villas,
winds a broad carriage-drive, and in the distance
appears a horseman, slowly riding along,
the hoofs of his steed falling lightly upon the
way leading into the handsome grounds of a
villa situated back from the road.

Peering through the foliage he beholds a light
in one of the windows, and from his lips break
the words:

"It is the signal! she will be there."
Quietly he enters the gate, closing it without
a sound behind him, and then leaving the drive
that approaches the house, he skirts the fence,
and rides toward a distant clump of trees,
through which patches of white glimmer in the
moonlight.

Nearer and nearer he approaches the clump
of trees, using his spurs to force his horse on,
for the animal seems to dread some danger
lurking in the dark covert, and, with the peculiar
instinct of dumb brutes, dreading to approach
the spot where the dead lay at rest.

Presently through the foliage a white fence
was visible, surrounding the marble monuments
erected over those who had sunk to sleep for
ever; but, apparently, with no superstitions
feeling regarding a cemetery, the horseman
urged his horse forward, and springing to the
ground threw the bridle-rein over a post.

As he did so the animal started with a loud
snort, but a word from his master calmed him.
What had caused the sudden flight of the
steed was certain sufficient to cause him to
turn toward him, and, bending over, imprinted
a kiss upon the upturned face.

"It is not a cheerful place, Launcelot, for a
lovers' tryst, yet I do not fear my dead ancestors,
for I have never harmed them; but then I
had an idea that our other rendezvous was
known, and hence wrote you to come here."

"And I would have come anywhere to meet
you again; but something arisen of late to
arouse your suspicion?"

"Yes; my father seems to watch me, and
yesterday forbade me to go, after nightfall, to
the arbor on the cliff; but tell me, Launcelot, when will our meetings be no longer secret?"

"To-morrow, Lucille, I intend to seek your
father and tell him of my love for you; he, as I
do not, other than what I have told you regarding
myself."

"And I have kept my promise and never
made one inquiry regarding Mr. Launcelot
Vertner, the handsome young gentleman who
saved my life, and then stole my heart," said
the maiden, playfully.

"You will find, Lucille, that I have deceived
you in one thing only, but I did so with no
dishonesty, I pledge my honor."

"Circumstances over which you and I had no
control caused me to beg you to keep our meet-
ings a secret for the present, and a fear of losing you
perhaps made me err in this; but to-mor-
row you shall know all, for, having been North
at school, since you were a very little girl, the
rumors of the neighborhood are unknown to
you."

"I hate gossip, Launcelot, and frequently
have to hush up old Mammy Chloe, who, like
many other old negroes, likes to chat about the
affairs of others; but to-morrow you will see
me meet your foot unto death."

"Yes; and, Lucille, you will still love me,
come what may."

"Never can I love any one else, Launcelot;" and
Lucille laid her hand gently upon the man's
shoulder, while the moonlight, streaming down
upon them, made a picture worthy the artist's
brush.

The maiden was scarcely more than seventeen,
with a Madama-like face of wondrous
beauty, and a tall, willowy form, perfectly
molded.

She was dressed in white, and her embroidered
skirt trailed upon the dew-gemmed grass,
while a mossy-worsted wrap hid the masses of golden hair
and the maid's head.

The man was six feet in height, as straight as
an arrow, full-chested, with broad shoulders,
and a form that was not only elegant, but de-
noted great strength and activity.

He was dressed in a riding-suit, top-boots, and
a gray slouch hat, the broad brim being turned
up, permitting his face to be visible.

And it was a face that few could look upon
and not admire—a face of beauty in every out-
line, blended with nobleness and calm dignity,
a dignity that amounted almost to sternness,
when the features were in repose.

The complexion was dark; the hair and long,
drooping moustache, black, and the eyes restless
and full of fire.

Relying to the maiden's question, the man
said, slowly:

"It seems almost too much happiness, Lu-
cille, when I think that I may win you as my
wife, and bitter obstacles are before us; but we
will hope for the best. Now you must not re-

main longer out in the night air, and to-morrow
our fate will be sealed."

"Devil incarnate! this night shall your fate
be sealed."

The words rung out loud and stern from
the shadow of a tree and confronted the lovers, an
upraised arm and knife in hand.

But, quick as was his spring, and taken by
surprise as he was, the man thrust Lucille to one
side, and a pistol gleamed in his hand, aimed di-
rectly at the heart of the assailant.

"Drop the knife, Colonel Darrington, or I
will kill you!"

"For Heaven's sake, do not fire, Launcelot;
it is my father!" and the trembling maiden
sprung between the two men.

Instantly her lover lowered his pistol, while
he said, sadly:

"Forgive me, Lucille; for the moment I forgot
that you were my father, and only looked upon
him as the lifetime foe of my race."

"Ay, Launcelot Grenville, and from this moment
you will be the pastime of my life."

"Now, in the presence of my daughter, there
must be no scene; but to-morrow, sir, you shall
hear from me and the sun shall set upon one
of us."

"Oh, Launcelot! I am a Grenville!" cried
Lucille, half shrinking away.

"Yes, Lucille; I told you that there were
bitter barriers between our love for each other—I
am Launcelot Vertner Grenville," said the
young man calmly.

"And you love this man, Lucille?" cried the
father, turning toward his daughter.

"I do, father, with all my heart and soul."

"God bless you, Lucille; and, sir, I love her with
the honor of a true man, and I would ask you
and her to let the dead past bury its dead, and
to end the young man's life."

"And again I say—never!"

"Father, I love him, and he loves me; he has
as much, if not more, as I remember the history
of the fearful vendetta between our families, to
forgive you than you and I, so listen to our appeal,
father, and let the past be buried forever."

The maiden's voice was plaintive and appealing,
as she approached her father; she rested a
hand upon either shoulder, and looked beseech-
ingly into his white, stern face.

But the devil of his nature had complete as-
cendancy, and in hoarse, cutting tones, he said:

"I swear it! Your life, or mine, Lance Gren-
ville!"

"Come, Lucille."

The maiden quickly sprang from him to the
side of her lover and throwing her arms around
his neck, she cried passionately:

"Oh, Launcelot! Launcelot! This is the last
of my happy dream of love! Farewell! forever,
forever!"

Drawing her quickly toward him he pressed a
kiss upon her forehead and turned and sprang
sprung into his saddle, and dashed swiftly from
the scene, urging his splendid horse, by a
mighty leap, over the picket fence that sur-
rounded the handsome grounds of the Darrin-
gton villa, and flying down the road at a mad
pace that proved how his noble heart was torn
with grief and despair.

"By heaven, sir, you will dare me to strike
you even here. Never will I consent that your
blood and mine shall mingle in the veins of a
human being. Only in hatred and the bitter
struggle for life and death shall your blood
mix with mine."

"So, sir, Colonel Darrington. You have
spoken, and the grave now yawns between us—

a grave I was willing to step across with ex-
tended hand."

"And I hurl back that proffered hand with
hatred and contempt."

"Father, this gentleman saved my life, for he
was who saved me the day I was kidnapped
by the coast pirates; he it was who attacked
them single-handed, killed two of their num-
ber and rescued me."

"Great God! is this true, Lucille?" and the
strong man staggered back as though dizzy
with overwhelming emotion.

"It is true, father; I told you that a horse-
man passing, and doubtless a traveler, came
to my aid, and I told you the truth, for only
days after, when our riding, did I meet him,
and from that time on we met often, until
I learned to love him with all the devotion
of my heart."

"And, Colonel Darrington, fearing that Lu-
cille would turn from me in horror, knowing
me as Lance Grenville, I gave her part of my
name, that of Launcelot Vertner, and it was
my intention to-morrow to seek you and ask
that the past might be forgotten."

"And again I say—never!"

"Father, I love him, and he loves me; he has
as much, if not more, as I remember the history
of the fearful vendetta between our families, to
forgive you than you and I, so listen to our appeal,
father, and let the past be buried forever."

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rounded the handsome grounds of the Darrin-
gton villa, and flying down the road at a mad
pace that proved how his noble heart was torn
with grief and despair.

CHAPTER II.

THE DUEL-VENDETTA.

COLONEL FERD DARRINGTON, a stern, haughty
man of forty, and the last male survivor of his
race, sat on the broad piazza of his elegant
house, the morning after the scene at the bury-
ing-ground of his family.

His brow was dark and clouded, his lips firm

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"Ah, sir, beg Launcelot Grenville not to kill my father!"

The words and voice were pleading, and Arthur Grenville seemed moved with pity, while he answered sadly:

"Alas, Miss Darrington, I fear that it will be the other way; but I will do all in my power, for your sake and my brother's, to prevent a fatal termination."

"God bless you," and stepping back Lucille allowed the carriage to go on, while she retraced her way to the mansion, keeping a hedge between herself and the eye of her father, who still paced the piazza.

Having objected to the young man named as Colonel Darrington's first second, on account of his wild and dissolute character, Arthur Grenville could find no fault with Paul Van Loo, a wealthy young planter, and a friend of both himself and brother, and he accordingly sought him out and meeting was arranged for sunrise the following morning, at a lonely grove upon a point that jutted out into the Gulf.

Before the hour arrived the following day, the Grenville carriage with its negro coachman and footman in livery, rolled along rapidly to the field, where, ten years before, the father of Lance and Arthur had fallen by the hand of Fred Darrington, and where, for three generations the Darringtons and Grenvilles had faced each other in the deadly vendetta, and always with fatality to one name or the other.

It was a bitter feud, that had begun half a century before, when a Grenville had been the successful rival of a Darrington for the hand of a beauty and heiress, and had eventually ended in bloodshed, the mantle of hate descending like an heirloom from father to son, until at last two of the houses had perished each other.

So impatient was Fred Darrington to meet the man who had dared to love his daughter, that the brothers found him, and his second already upon the field, they having come there upon horseback, accompanied by a negro servant who bore the deadly weapons to be used in the affray.

Bowing coldly to each other as they met, the two seconds then walked one side, while Colonel Darrington impatiently paced to and fro, an evil glint in his eye, and Lance Grenville leaned against a tree, his arms folded, his face pale, but emotionless, and his eyes gazing afar off upon the gulf, as though striving to look into the great beyond and behold the fate in store for him.

How he would have shrunk in horror from that future, had he read in those blue waters the destiny that awaited him.

"Colonel Darrington, Lieutenant Grenville informs me that his brother was the one who rescued your daughter from the coast pirates, some months ago; are you aware of that fact?" and Paul Van Loo turned to his principal.

"I am, sir, and I am surprised that Mr. Grenville should endeavor to shun this meeting by hedging himself behind a favor rendered to me and mine," was the haughty retort.

"You mistake, sir: Mr. Grenville is represented by his brother, who, in the hope of ending this affair without a fatal termination, told me of the circumstances which none of us in the neighborhood before such call, and believed that, if known to you that you owed to Mr. Lance Grenville the life, and perhaps more, of your daughter, this present difficulty might be averted, I spoke as I did."

Paul Van Loo seemed surprised, and drawing a sword from its scabbard tested its temper, while Arthur Grenville walked toward his brother, but had not seemed to hear the effort made at a reconciliation between himself and his enemy.

A few moments more, and throwing aside their coats the two men stood facing each other, swords in hand, for, as the challenged party, Lance Grenville had chosen those weapons, and his motive for doing so was soon evident, for, a superb master in fence, he had determined to disarm his antagonist and give him his life.

A few passes, and the blade of Colonel Darrington was twisted from his hand; but, without following up his advantage, Lance Grenville lowered the point of his weapon, and said, calmly:

"For the sake of Lucille, sir, I will give you your life."

"My life I will not accept at your hands, sir, and as you have proven my master with the sword, the pistol will place us upon a more equal footing," and Fred Darrington was white with rage, and seeing that he was determined, Paul Van Loo had no alternative but to take from their velvet case the long dueling pistols his principal had insisted upon bringing along.

With a bow, Lance Grenville signified his acceptance of the weapons and a second meeting, and soon after, the two splendid-looking men again faced each other at ten paces apart.

"Fire! Fire!" cried for God's sake, do not let that man kill me!" Arthur Grenville placed the loaded pistol in his brother's hand.

It soon came, given by Paul Van Loo:

"Gentlemen, are you ready?"

Both men bowed.

"Fire! One!"

With the word one, the pistol of Fred Darrington exploded, and a dull thud was heard, while Lance Grenville started slightly, and moved one step backward; but, instantly, he recovered himself, and suddenly raising his pistol fired over his head at a red-head—in hue a fit songster for that scene—that sat singing in a tree above the heads of the two men.

Instantly the red-head fell from his perch, his head severed by the bullet from Lance Grenville's pistol—a splendid specimen of marksmanship.

Paul Van Loo sprung to the side of Colonel Darrington, crying:

"Colonel, you saw his shot? He has twice saved your life, and I beg now that this affair end here."

The white lips of Fred Darrington parted, and the words were hissed out:

"I demand another fire! Load those pistols again, Van Loo."

"It rests with Mr. Grenville, whether he will meet you again," said Paul Van Loo, evidently hurt at the determined hate of his principal.

"My brother has twice saved his life, and twice spared that of Colonel Darrington. I will not consent to another fire," said Lieutenant Grenville hotly.

"Then I shall hold him responsible whenever and wherever I meet him, after leaving this field," came the quick retort.

"Arthur, if it has to come to chance encounter to settle this affair, let it end here. I will exchange shots again with Colonel Darrington," said Lance, and his lips slightly quivered as though with some inward emotion that was choking him.

Again the two men faced each other, and once more the word was given to fire, and both pistols were discharged together.

As the smoke drifted away, Colonel Darrington was discovered lying his full length upon the ground, while Lance Grenville stood with folded arms, glancing down upon him, and with an expression of intense sorrow in his face.

"I have killed him, Arthur, and Lucille will now curse me."

There was a depth of feeling in the words that proved how terribly the strong man suffered, and Arthur Grenville made no reply.

"Yes, he is dead. But, Grenville, you acted most nobly; are you not hurt?" and Paul Van Loo arose from the side of the dead man and approached Lance Grenville.

"At the first fire his bullet struck here—see! This turned its course from my heart, and it gave me a mere flesh wound," and he took from his breast-pocket a miniature set in a heavy gold case.

But the glass was shattered to atoms, the gold indented, and the face that had been painted

thereon was deeply marred by the bullet, and yet both Paul Van Loo and Arthur Grenville saw that it was the miniature likeness of Lucille Darrington that had saved the life of Lance Grenville!

"Take the carriage, Paul, to bear his body home in, and we will return on your horses," said Lance Grenville sadly, and mounting the pony animal ridden here by Colonel Darrington, the unhappy man rode away, followed by his brother, who felt deeply for him in his sorrows, yet rejoiced secretly that the affair had terminated as it had.

In the meantime Paul Van Loo, aided by the servants, had placed the body in the carriage, which at once rolled rapidly away toward the Darrington villa, where the longing, staring eyes of Lucille beheld its approach, and with a cry of joy she sprang to her feet, for she recognized the vehicle, and believed that those who had gone forth with deadly intent had returned safe.

Eagerly she watched the carriage, saw it halt before the broad stairs, the door open, and then, as her eyes fell on the dark, dead face of her father, she uttered a shriek of anguish and fell heavily upon the floor, where she lay like one whose life-cords had snapped in twain.

CHAPTER III. A WOMAN'S CURE.

TOWARD the close of day, several years after the death of Colonel Darrington by the hand of Launcelot Grenville, a rakish-looking schooner was standing in from the Gulf, and heading for a small cove, sheltered by a heavily-wooded point of land of what is now the coast of the State of Mississippi.

That the schooner was an armed craft was evident by a glance at her hull and rig, for vessels of her size and single-tack masts that sailed far ast, with an almost perpendicular stern, were not found in the merchant service.

As she drew nearer the land, a person was discovered upon her decks four guns to a broadside, and a bow and stern chaser mounted upon a pivot, while a crew of sixty men were idly grouped about, looking at the pretty villa plantations that dotted the coast.

Upon the quarter-deck were several officers, who like the men, had a foreign air, and whose dark faces, medium-sized statures and bright eyes denoted that they were of Mexican origin.

The officers wore uniforms, elaborately trimmed with gold lace, and the sailors were attired in black jackets, black pants, and skull-caps encircled by a white border, which was embroidered in green silk a script.

One person upon the quarter-deck stood near the helmsman, directing him how to steer, and that this man commanded the destinies of the schooner was evident at a glance.

"I am, sir, and I am surprised that Mr. Grenville should endeavor to shun this meeting by hedging himself behind a favor rendered to me and mine," was the haughty retort.

"You mistake, sir: Mr. Grenville is represented by his brother, who, in the hope of ending this affair without a fatal termination, told me of the circumstances which none of us in the neighborhood before such call, and believed that, if known to you that you owed to Mr. Lance Grenville the life, and perhaps more, of your daughter, this present difficulty might be averted, I spoke as I did."

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A few moments more, and throwing aside their coats the two men stood facing each other, swords in hand, for, as the challenged party, Lance Grenville had chosen those weapons, and his motive for doing so was soon evident, for, a superb master in fence, he had determined to disarm his antagonist and give him his life.

Instantly the sails were lowered and furled, and the schooner rode quietly upon the waves, as silent as though the three-score men upon her decks had gone to rest.

Thus an hour passed away, and then a red-dish glare was visible on the eastern horizon, and into the clear skies sailed the moon, covered by a net of stars upon her way.

As the schooner neared the shore, the sun went down behind the western horizon, and half a score of small pleasure yachts that were sailing upon the waters, filled with gay parties, headed for their respective anchorages, and darkness settled upon the sea just as the armed vessel swept up into the wind and dropped anchor within a quarter of a mile from the land.

Instantly the sails were lowered and furled, and the schooner rode quietly upon the waves, as silent as though the three-score men upon her decks had gone to rest.

Thus an hour passed away, and then a red-dish glare was visible on the eastern horizon, and into the clear skies sailed the moon, covered by a net of stars upon her way.

"Launcelot Grenville!"

Instantly the eyes of the man fell upon the form of a woman standing not ten feet from him, and where the light of the moon, penetrating the foliage, fell full upon her.

As motionless as though carved in stone, dressed in pure white, and with her wealth of hair hanging loose over her shoulders and adown her back, she looked like some ghostly inhabitant risen from the grave at her feet.

Though her face was youthful, it was livid, and each feature was imprinted with the mark of sorrow and suffering, while her hair was as white as snow, and shone like silver threads in the light of the moon.

Her arm was outstretched, and the index finger pointed straight at the man before her, while upon it sprang like a ruby fire, a ruby of immense size and wondrous beauty.

The man essayed to speak, to move, but neither tongue nor feet would obey his will, and he, too, stood motionless, the two, with the weird, strange scene around them, making a startling, fearful tableau, one which few people would care to look upon in reality.

A moment they stood thus, and then once more the full, rich tones of the woman's voice were heard.

"Launcelot Grenville, how dare you stand there by the grave of the man whom you deserve?"

"Lucille! Lucille!"

The cry was like that of a lost soul imploring mercy, and the gold-braided arms were stretched forth in earnest supplication, but he made no step toward the woman, from whom now came in the hoarse tones of intensified passion:

"Launcelot Grenville, I curse you!"

(To be continued.)

"Ah, no, my fair friends, yonder craft does not float the skull and cross-bones at her peak, though Heaven knows I have had cause enough to make a very devil out of me; but I must not stand here," and he again pushed on, carefully approaching the house.

Ascending the broad steps which trembled beneath his feet, he walked noiselessly round the piazza to the rear of the mansion and there suddenly halted, as a dim light shone from the window.

He beheld a room that had once been handsomely furnished, but the furniture was now worn and faded, yet still had an air of neatness upon it.

At a table, upon which stood a lamp, sat an old negro in a calico dress and bandana handkerchief, engaged in knitting, while she hummed a low voice a camp-meeting air, keeping slow time with her needles.

With steps as noiseless and stealthy as that of a panther he crept up and glanced in at the open window.

He entered a room that had once been handsomely furnished, but the furniture was now worn and faded, yet still had an air of neatness upon it.

Upon a chair near the broad fireplace, in which glowed a few coals, was an old negro man, his head frosted with the snows of three-score and ten years.

He held a pipe between his lips and was gazing into the fire with that little crookedness look habitual to old age, which gives the idea that those nearing the grave are ever looking back into the bygone with memories only sad.

From the room were two doors, one evidently leading out upon a back piazza and the other into what appeared a bedchamber.

"Here I can learn what I would know about her; but I will first seek yonder, for I would not be seen here by any one, if I can avoid it."

So saying the man retraced his way around the piazza, and descending the steps went across the grounds in the direction of a distant grove of trees.

Crossing an open lawn or field he stalked rapidly along the moonlight fell full upon him, and hastily darted into the shade of the trees.

It was the same grove that had been the fatal trysting-place of Launcelot Grenville and Lucille Darrington years before; but here, as upon the mansion, rested an air of neglect and decay, for the little fence that inclosed the burying-ground was half-broken down, and rank weeds had hidden the graves from sight—not all the mounds that marked the resting-places of the dead, for one was free from rude growth upon it, and the marble at its head stone pure and white in the moonlight.

Quickly the man bent over and read the inscription:

"ERECTED TO THE MEMORY

OF
MY FATHER,
FERDINAND DARRINGTON,

WHO FELL BY THE HAND OF

LAUNCELOT VERTNER GRENVILLE,

Who, by his act, buried in this grave my every hope in life."

With a groan of unspeakable anguish the man turned his back, while from his white lips broke the cry:

"Oh Heaven have mercy! I needed but this blow from her to fill my cup of bitterness to overflowing. Lucille, oh, Lucille! how you have misjudged me, and how your love has fured to hate, to cause you to place there on enduring marble the story of the fatal act of mine against your father."

As one by one the stars disappeared, he crept into the shadows of the trees, and the moonlight fell full upon him.

He lay down beside the grave, and the index finger pointed straight at the man before her, while upon it sprang like a ruby fire, a ruby of immense size and wondrous beauty.

The man essayed to speak, to move, but neither tongue nor feet would obey his will, and he, too, stood motionless, the weird, strange scene around them, making a startling, fearful tableau, one which few people would care to look upon in reality.

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"Launcelot Grenville, how dare you stand there by the grave of the man whom you deserve?"

"Lucille! Lucille!"

The cry was like that of a lost soul imploring mercy, and the gold-braided arms were stretched forth in earnest supplication, but he made no step toward the woman, from whom now came in the hoarse tones of intensified passion:

"Launcelot Grenville, I curse you!"

(To be continued.)

NIGHT.

BY WILLIAM TENNISON HEATON.

Girt with misty memories sublime,
Look on her eyes with stars!
She comes to me in dreams,
And sits by me in sleep.

All of the kings and queens of earth,
She trails her glory yet;
She giveth to the planets birth,
And has nothing to regret.

Lucille.

BY LAIL GAY.

A PHAETON, velvet-lined, drawn by cream-colored ponies, rolled along the beach. In it sat Mrs. Ralph Strathmore

to remark that I believe in them same articles, pilgrims."

"What? Impossible! You believe in the supernatural, Hilarity?" exclaimed a half-dozen in chorus.

"Yes, I'll allow I do," he replied; "leastways, a feller arter believe suthin' o' the kind, when he's bin haunted at every turn fer five years."

"You don't mean to say that you believe your self to be haunted?" Tom Daring interrogated.

"I knowed it, I knowed it, I settin' here. More'n that, I'm *doomed*. Oh, I kin smile, but tain't allus ther wisest that may smile. Tell you about it, ef y'all lend me yer ear."

"Some five year ago I war a pretty spruce dandy chap, and all allowed I war a regular dandy an' a Zip Coon on ther fight."

"I war down in the City of Mexico, then, and it ain't wu' much pride that I own that I war engaged in the legitimate pursuit o' gambling. Few, indeed, were there in the Mexican metropolis, who were sharper at cards than myself."

"Well, as a natural consequence, I made monies, and I spent it. None knew how better than I, dressed in the height of fashion, drove nobby turnouts, and lived high. The hot-blooded Spanish Mexican señoritas and señoritas drew themselves before me, and worshipped me. But women warn't particularly in my line, and so I passed them by."

"During my experience as a gambler I met many of the titled Greasers, and where they were o' money value, plucked them without mercy. Among them came a young, high-blooded cuss to me, of aristocratic family—a regular nabob, he war, with more power with the city officials than I had supposed, at first. He brought with him his sister, a handsome brunette of most attractive form and face, and I'd seen her more chamin' o' address in the city."

"Well, the proposition of this chap was that I must marry his sister, and suppose her, she in return aiding me to gamble, the being particularly lucky. You may be sure I refused him. I wasn't layin' in any Greaser, then, of I knew myself. So I advised the Greaser to take his sister whence she came, and offer her to some of her countrymen."

"This he indignantly refused to do, and consequently I was challenged to play for money, with the dark-skinned Mexican beauty. It was the intention between us to play until one or the other was cleaned out, and as the Mexican nobo was possessed of cash to the amount of ten thousand dollars, the tournament promised to be interesting."

"And it was, to some extent. We hired private apartments, and set to work. At the end of forty-eight hours I had won even *pro* that the Mexican had in the world. I was then commanded to marry Señorita Inezio, but firmly refused. And I only escaped from the room by running my sabre through the Mexican nabob, and hurling the señorita to the floor. And as I made my escape she hurled at me a frightful curse—pronounced my doom!"

"It was difficult I escaped from the city of Mexico, for she caused a score of Greaser hellions to pursue and attack me. But I succeeded in laying them all out, and took myself to Texas, where I had seen the last of my vengeful Mexican adversary. But I was mistaken. There, at Texanid, and at Santa Fe, I received notes from her, all of the same import, pronouncing my doom upon the tenth of July, 187- which is now close at hand. Tomorrow is the day of my doom."

"Pshaw! I see nothing supernatural," said "Judge" Hoffe. "Ef you are going to submit to death at the hands of a live woman you're a bigger fool 'n I took ye fer."

"Inez Marcia is not alive!" Old Hilarity said, solemnly. "It is her vengeful spirit that pursues me. No man can dissuade me from what is in my mind, a firm conviction. Why, man, have I not had enough proof? After leaving Santa Fe I went far up into the Rocky Mountains, the San Juan moun'ts. She followed me, and confronted me in a gambling-saloon. Maddened with desperation, I shot her dead in her tracks, and fled the town to escape the Vigilantes."

"Next, one night, when I was at Del Norte, she appeared to me ag'in, ag'in I shot her. Nor did I leave the town until I seed her six foot under ther sod. I had hopes, then, o' future rest, but I have never known it. At Cheyenne, while gambling, I received a stab in the back, and turned to see Inez Marcia flee from the room. And she has appeared to me off and on ever since. That's no use o' talkin': no human flesh could survive so many deaths, and it is her apparition that appears to me. I saw it last night after this train left Cheyenne, and I've made up my mind that I'm upon my last train!"

"And we found that the old guide was not to be dissuaded from this conviction. He had his mind resolutely set, and to all our endeavors at explanation, and to all our "poohing," he would simply nod in his way, grimly."

"Some of us were inclined to regard it as a hallucination o' the old guide."

"And when he gone out on his rounds about camp, previous to turning in, we put our heads together, and resolved to watch sharply against any harm coming to the guide on the following day, for thought we, should that day pass without the fulfillment of Old Hilarity's conviction, he would lose belief in his case."

"And so we did keep a close watch of him the next day."

"Jackson," said the old guide to me, about sundown, "do you think you shall ever go East, as far as New York State?"

"Upon answering him that such was my intention, he took his knife and severed a lock of hair from my head."

"I've got a sister out thar," he said, naming the directions, "and I would ask ye, as a favor, ter give the gal that lock as a dying gift from a prodigal brother."

The day passed without incident, and the wagons with their lazy bull-teams moved at a comparative snail's pace, on over the rolling prairie, in the broiling sunshine, which was somewhat alleviated in its heat by a cool, refreshing north-western breeze.

At night we pitched camp on the western bank of Sage creek, where grazing and water were in abundance.

During the day Old Hilarity had been more interested in the art of the camp-fire circle, that night, he earned his *gag-gag*, for he was full of fun and uproarious in hilarity. He sung, he told stories, and smoked, and seemed quite to have forgotten that his day of doom had come, was gradually going.

At nine o'clock he rolled in his blanket, as did the rest of us, with the exception of Maristas and Keefe, who went on guard, the former being specially detailed to keep watch of Hilarity during the night.

When we awoke in the morning, the guide still lay motionless in his blanket, and upon examination we found that he was dead!

We found no wounds or marks of violence, and making no effort to decide that, haunted by his strange hallucinations, the old man had quietly died at the hour of his doom. The Mexican girl's oath must have worked upon him like a mania, that resulted in final sleep.

We buried him on the banks of Sage creek, and many travelers have noticed, and pondered over the green mound, at the head of which stands a plain board, marked:

"OLD HILARITY."

The Boston Post says that a man can get at Saratoga about two hundred different kinds of bad-tasting water, and this year's discoveries haven't begun.

A CITIZEN of Fleming, Ky., fired at a rat, struck a keg of powder, blew his house to pieces, and had to jump into the river to keep from burning up. The rat remains unhurt.

IF I SHOULD DIE TO-NIGHT.

BY JOSIE C. MALOTT.

If I should die to-night
Would I not well?
With peace and rest be mine?
My heart tell?

Would those I've loved so much
Grieve soft and low?
And kiss the still, cold face,
Whiter than snow?

And in the coming years
Not quite forget?
The once familiar face,
Now calm and set?

If and we grieved or wronged
One faithful heart,
Would not the silent lips
Assuage the smart?

And would he heart of mine
Forget its pain,
If daisies bloomed above me,
And fell the rain?

If I should die to-night,
Oh, Savior mine!
My heart assures me this,
That I am Thine!

The Pink of the Pacific;

OR,
The Adventures of a Stowaway.

BY OLIVER OPTIC.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE HOME OF THE COMMANDER.

The captured proas and the prisoners were disposed of, and there was great rejoicing in Koti over their victory. Old Hilarity was the most popular man in the town, and when he landed to report to the rajah, the people bowed down to him as though he had been god. Pink remained in the cabin of the proa while he was absent. As the friend of the commander who had saved the dominion of the rajah, he was treated with great consideration by the Dyaks left on board. He could not speak a word to them or they to him; but they manifested their good will by signs and kindly deeds.

The wind was so light, and so often contrary in the bends of the river, that the Belle of the Bay made slow progress of her trip up the river. Pink had no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that her mission in this direction related to him. Her people had soon secured a platform of the commander's proa; and I believe that Captain Bodfield was unwilling to go back to the Belle of the Bay. I have stood almost everything; but I will not go where I am not wanted, and be kicked by Tom Dunwood when he takes a notion to do so," replied Pink.

"I have been in this place for ten years; and I have seldom had an opportunity to speak a word of my own language to a human being. But I like the Dyaks; for they are not half so savage as they have supposed us to be to-day. They have been fighting for their land and country; and they have done bravely. When I first came here the Rajah of Koti was anxious to conquer the territory of his neighbors as any of these petty rulers are; but I persuaded him to turn his attention in another direction.

He has been developing the resources of his country, and he has now a considerable trade with the English and the Dutch. In fact he has grown very rich, and his wealth has excited the cupidity of the Rajah of Djama.

This is the third time we have defeated him; and I think he will not attempt the conquest again. Our land force is not strong; three days ago, about four miles from the town, if they could have captured the batteries I have planted on the river, they might have succeeded better the next time. Now they have lost their last chance. I may leave this country now, for I desire to return to my native land before I die."

Pink listened with interest to the narrative of the commander; but he could not make out why he was so interested in him if he intended to return to his native land. While they were talking, the proa turned into a branch of the river, and after going a short distance up this side, it came up to the bank in front of a house situated in the middle of the stream. Even in the night, Pink could see that it was a beautiful region. Just above the house the stream widened into a broad lake, one whose tranquil surface floated a large schooner yacht.

"This is my home," said the commander. "But it is so dark that you can't see what sort of a place it is."

"I can see that it is a very nice place," replied Pink. "I suppose that vessel above belongs to you?"

"That is a yacht in which I came from Baltimore. I seldom use it now, though it is in excellent condition and could be made ready for a voyage in a few days."

"I should think you would like her better than one of these proas, when you go for pleasure, or when you fight the enemy," added Pink.

"I think I could eat something if I had it," said the commander. "I think I could get along without it."

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"I think I could eat something if I had it," said the commander. "I



Published every Monday morning at nine o'clock.

NEW YORK, JULY 26, 1879.

The STAR JOURNAL is sold by all Newsdealers in the United States and in the Canadian Dominion. Parties unable to obtain it from a newsdealer, or those preferring to have the paper sent direct by mail, from the publication office, are supplied at the following rates:

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A Man's Desperate Game.

BY MRS. MARY REED CROWELL,
AUTHOR OF "VIALS OF WRATH," "TWO GIRLS'
LIVES," ETC., ETC.

A powerful and intensely dramatic romance of Society and Villa life, in which a young girl of nameless parentage is driven into a singularly strange fight with Fate. It is in this popular author's best style, and will excite uncommon interest in character, plot and story.

Sunshine Papers.

Apologies.

Did it ever occur to you that there is a great waste of breath spent in apologies? An apology is, certainly, a form of words quite necessary in many cases, a politeness that may not be entirely banished from use in good society; yet there are numberless times when apologies are not only useless but positively become impoliteness and annoyance rather than courtesies due from one person to another.

An "Excuse me," or "I beg your pardon," is never out of place when an accident or carelessness of one person equally affects another. There is never an occasion when you inconvenience or startle a friend or stranger when you should not offer them the recompense of an apology, no matter how trifling the act. Neither should a person neglect to apologize for any speech or deed that gives pain to others; nor for any incivility unwittingly offered. But when you, my dear woman, meet Mrs. A. and kiss her, and are so glad to see her, and she asks why you have not called upon her in so long, you had better omit all the apologies you shower upon her in the form of polite lies—telling her you have "thought of her so often," and "started several times to make that call," and "something of importance has always detained you," but that you "have been longing to see her," and "shall, really, come very soon," and keep discreet silence, or else tell the truth—that you do not care enough about seeing her to take the trouble to call on her; that you have had plentiful opportunities of visiting her, but have not wanted to use them.

And when you, dear sir, call on the friend for whom you have professed such extravagant fondness, but whom you have utterly neglected for months, it would be quite as well for you to omit any apologies, since you cannot obliterate the self-evident fact that you have been forgetful of his unchangeable attachment to you, and have made no effort to see one whose friendship is so much truer than your own that he has felt the sting of your indifference.

When a gentleman meets an acquaintance to whom he has pledged himself to do some favor, which favor has never entered his mind since he promised it until he again meets the person to whom it was promised, why, that person of short memory had better not let apologetics be the first sentences that fall from his lips at this meeting, since uttering any excuse but the truth would be a bad use to make of breath that had better be reserved for less false—and since a falsehood is pre-eminently a rudeness—impolite purposes. In fact, when apologies are merely attempts at representing one's conduct in a light that the individual, in his own heart, knows to be false, they had better remain unspoken. An apology that is in spirit, if not in actual wording, an untruth, ceases to be a politeness, but becomes, rather, a committed sin on the part of the person that offers it, and an insult to the person to whom it is offered.

Then there is a form of apology, often kindly meant, that is really an impertinence to individuals and a confessed lowering of one's self. How frequently do we hear persons apologize for the appearance of their homes, for the costume in which they make a visit or receive one, and for the accommodations with which they provide their guests: "You must excuse the looks of my house, but we are house-cleaning;" or, "The children have been playing and creating so much disorder;" or, "There is no fire in the parlor and I have to bring you in where I have made such a mess sewing." If you invite a person to visit you, or to call upon you, it is presumable that you ask them from a desire for their further acquaintance and companionship; at least from some motive less degrading than a mere desire to have them admire your house, or the neatness always reigning there. Then why immediately lower your visitor and yourself by presupposing them to have come for any such purpose and that you asked them for such purpose, as your apologies cannot fail to intimate?

Always treat your visitors as if glad to see them, instead of initiating their visit with remarks that show you either ought to be ashamed of yourself for not having things in better order, or that they ought to be ashamed of themselves for coming at a wrong time.

When you give a guest the best convenience you have, omit apologies for what you have not. If for good reasons you are obliged to wear a certain costume, never apologize for it. The fact that you are obliged to wear it is suf-

ficient in itself for you to wear it proudly, and for it to be of no consequence what others think of it. If you have a caller, and your dress is not all that you desire, do not excuse or even mention the fact. If you are always neat you will always be ready for visitors; if not, you quite deserve to be found out occasionally, and apologies would be merely untruths.

Now, a word to housekeepers; and let me beg of them never to utter an apology for what is put upon their tables. What is good enough in the way of food for one's own family is good enough for guests, who come unexpectedly or by invitation. A housekeeper who always has a neat, clean table, and some well-cooked plain food, need not be ashamed to invite a prince of blood royal to take a meal with her—without an extra arrangement, save his plate, etc. Of all detestable things—nothing is so offensive to well-bred people as "You must excuse me for not having something nice; if I had only known you were coming, etc. My bread is not as good as usual this week. I am afraid my cake is dry. I am so sorry the meat is not better done."

Remember, you to whom apologizing has become a *habit*, that only strict necessity and strict truth can make an apology a politeness. A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

THE GOOD WE HAVE WITH US.

We are rarely contented with our lot in life, and think that the present age is the hardest, and our tasks the most severe; yet, were we to consider how much easier labor is performed, how much better paid, than in times past, maybe we would be inclined to feel glad to know that we didn't live in a bygone age.

No better exemplification of this fact can be given than by relating some incidents that came under my special notice.

A young lad, who was away on a vacation during the summer, was complaining over the amount of labor required of him at the store; and yet his attendance was only required there from seven o'clock in the morning until six o'clock at night. A gentleman, aged about fifteen years, told the lad of some of his experiences when he was a lad. Every morning he had to go to his employer's house for the key of the store, open the latter, build fires, sweep out and make himself generally useful through the day and in the evening until nine o'clock, close the store and carry the key to his employer's house again. One morning in winter in taking down the shutters he knocked out two of his front teeth by a severe fall on the ice. His lot was somewhat hard and he felt it to be so, and he poured his grievances into his employer's ear.

And his employer told him of the hard life he had led when he was a boy. That employer was what one might call "one of the old school"—a school happily dismissed some years ago—and was a great stickler for etiquette and felt his position. Every night, summer and winter—through storm and sunshine—the following was the programme: As soon as the store was safely locked, the lad placed the key in his pocket, and then he had to follow his master a distance of about a mile to his residence; he must never keep by his master's side, but follow him as though he were no more than a dog. Arrived at the master's house the lad took off his hat, handed the key to the master, remained uncovered until the gentleman entered his domicile, and then retraced his steps to his own home.

You may think the gentleman *might* just as well have carried the key home in his own pocket. Yes, he might have done so, but he *didn't*; he would have thought if beneath his dignity to be the carrier of a store-key, even though the store belonged to him. "It would have saved the boy some steps?" What is the saving of the steps of a poor, tired, worn-out, sleepy boy, compared with keeping up one's dignity? I blush for you that you should make such a remark.

But when "our boys" look about them, and see the heating by steam, the telephones, the elevators, and the thousand and one contrivances for comfort, convenience and safety, of which our ancestors were profoundly ignorant, I do not think they should murmur at what they have, but rather be thankful that they have so many conveniences, and that the inconveniences of a past age are not theirs to contend with.

May all kinds of work be done by electricity, and then people will complain because *that* is "so slow," and wish for something faster, because humanity is never content but even unsatisfied.

How messages fly over the electric wires, how quickly the mails are forwarded and distributed, how rapidly we are whirled along on our travels until it seems as though there could not, possibly, be any improvement made; still you will hear carping critics exclaim—"So slow! so awful slow!"

Do they mend matters by their complaints or are their complaints mainly or just?

Changes are brought about gradually. They must be thought over and experimented upon, trials made, and people must be prepared for these changes. I know this is a fast age—*too* fast, in my opinion, yet if it were not so fast maybe there would not be so many steamers lost, so many cars wrecked, so many factories and public buildings so imperfectly built, and we shouldn't be held accountable for so many awful casualties.

Stop and think! Pause and reflect! In striving to put "too much steam" and speed, haven't we gone *too* far, and had we been surer, though we were slower, might it not have been better for us and for others?

EVE LAWLESS.

Foolscap Papers.

The Lessons of Youth.

THE TRUE STORY OF GEORGE WASHINGTON'S NAME IN CABBAGES.

"GEORGE WASHINGTON, George Washington" came from the foot of the stairs that morning at seven o'clock, as if it had been shot out of a shotgun.

"Yes?" feebly came from the second story by the same route.

In fifteen minutes—"George Washington, ain't you up?"

"Y-a-a-s; I'm up—stairs," the last word not heard.

In ten minutes a couple of footfalls on the stairs too numerously to mention and meaning business, and the sound of somebody being jerked out of bed in haste for the mail, and G. W. went to put on his clothes fast enough to get his pants on for a jacket and his jacket on for his pants.

I want to show you something down in the garden," said his early father, bumping down-stairs.

George thought it was something with a long

handle, and called a hoe for short—and also for aggravation; but he didn't walk much farther than Weston, as his father led him along by the sleeve. By and by they stopped before something green, and said the father to the son:

"Do you see anything there?"

"Yes, I see something green there."

"Well, what does it look like?" asked the old man, taking a punch of snuff.

"It looks to me like it was cabbages of the early worm variety," said G. W., scratching his shin with his right heel with the toe tied up in a rag.

"Do you notice anything else about it peculiar? Look close," said the old man, with his hand on the boy's affectionate head.

"Yes, sir—ee, I do! It is my name. George Washington—in letters of living-green cabbages, and it's the funniest thing I ever saw out of a circus."

"Do you know who put them there, my dear and expensive son?" asked the elder W., patting him on the back much lighter than usual.

"No, I don't; but the man who made them come up that way had a cabbage-head on him, sure."

"Did you ever see anything like it before?" asked the father, looking at the cabbages over his spectacles to get a better view of them.

"Hardly ever," said the boy, who was destined by his father to become the future president of the United States like all other boys.

"Don't you think it is a most wonderful freak of Nature?" asked the original Washington, wiping his spectacles on the linen tail of his corduroy coat.

"Indeed it is, pap. But Nature didn't know enough about spelling to run a foot-race in a spelling-match at school. Don't you see that if Nature set out them seeds she made a great mistake there in spelling 'George' which she spells GOAGE. She must have seen that she was going to run short of seed and believed in making as few lines as possible. She didn't believe in cabbaging from the alphabet any more letters than she could get along with."

"Ah, true enough," said the old man, scratching his chin and looking serious, "whoever did it left out a letter, but, as you observed, it isn't one of the economies of Nature or anybody else. Here I myself have been writing your name without the E ever since you were born, and never knew the difference till now. Oh, sour-kraut!" and he took a thoughtful chew of tobacco and spit abstractedly on G. W.'s foot, and kicked a toe away that was smelling of his boot, as if it was a hoptical illusion. "Have you any idea that those cabbage-plants could have come up by chance, in that way?"

"Well, it might be, but all the chances in the world are that if Chance had anything to do with it he would not have spelled it 'Woshtington,'"

"That is so, my son; you can't always depend on anything to be correct. But, what does this lesson teach you?"

"I don't know, unless it is that name will some day come to a large head and be of good stalk."

"Just so, my boy, and it will also show you that your name is written already on your country's soil, and that it will grow if you hoe it and give it more attention than you usually give to other vegetation in this garden. There is a name, my boy, that is valuable."

"Yes, I see, father; cabbage-plants are already selling for ten cents a dozen in the market, and that name will furnish several dozen, and if, as you say, that name is mine, I think I can make enough out of it to run me to the neighborhood of Christmas."

"It also shows that you will see a good deal of cold slaw and a good deal of slaw-lettuce and other vegetables that will surpass the proud Plant-agents of our mother country, and that it will be ever green in our land, and it is an everlasting emblem that something can come to a head—or several of them. Have you any idea who sowed those seeds?"

"No; I don't know exactly who sowed the seed, but I see that whoever sowed them he missed a good many stiches, for there are places in the letters where they didn't come up according to contract or correctness, and they allowed a good many weeds to come up between, and if there is anything I hate and despise it is weeds. I always run away from them."

"It does not matter what fault you find with this performance; I want you to set to work and pull the weeds out of those letters, and take that hoe and go to work around that name. That is the best bed in the garden that you can cultivate; better than you can cultivate the bed in which you are such a hard seed to get started in the morning. And if that name in American soil, there doesn't come to something, it will be because I fail to see that you are at work at it from early sunrise till late sunset, and don't you forget it."

"But tell me, father, did you not plant seeds?" I think I can see your handwriting, and also your hand-spelling, in the name."

"Well, I never cut the cherry-tree like a little boy of my acquaintance did, but I cannot tell lie; I did it with my little—my little cabbage-seeds."

"Then, father, if you wanted my name to grow up so people could read it right, why did you not spell it correctly?"

"My son, I am very glad that you have the intellect to correct your father in his old age; yet still I am glad to be able to correct you in your early youth. I will say nothing about your criticisms on this name writ in the ground with cabbage-seeds, but I recollect that I had a hard time to get you out of the bed this morning. I promised myself, then, that I would have to let you feel the rod of empire, so I respectfully invite you to take off your coat and walk into the cellar so you won't disturb the neighbors. I can't spell well, but you won't be well a spell if that will do you any good, and I hope it will."

You can alpha-beat that he got nearly as much as he wanted. WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

THE Tribune, Sewickley, Pa.: "If all of our papers were as good in quality and as pure in tone as the STAR JOURNAL, the sources of literary demoralization would vanish. The STAR JOURNAL is, we believe, the best weekly published for readers of popular literature."

"ONEONTA CLERGYMAN" writes: "I do not believe much in fiction reading, but I know all young folks, and especially girls, like to read it. I have found it to be a good story, so as such reading will find its way into the hearts of all who read it."

"Yes?" feebly came from the second story by the same route.

In fifteen minutes—"George Washington, ain't you up?"

"Y-a-a-s; I'm up—stairs," the last word not heard.

In ten minutes a couple of footfalls on the stairs too numerously to mention and meaning business, and the sound of somebody being jerked out of bed in haste for the mail, and G. W. went to put on his clothes fast enough to get his pants on for a jacket and his jacket on for his pants.

I want to show you something down in the garden," said his early father, bumping down-stairs.

George thought it was something with a long

Topics of the Time.

—It is somewhat over two hundred years since the first public lantern was put up in Paris—a lantern inclosing a candle. This was in 1663. Louis XIV. was so pleased with this innovation that he ordered a medal to be struck, with the legend *Securitas mitior*.

—Pretty little Mile Van Zandt's *début* in London reminds divers critics of that of Petit seventeen years ago, and some of them are not backward in saying that the young lady is to be the prima donna of the future. Mile. Van Zandt has a charming and promising voice, and if her health can endure the strain of hard work she will probably fulfill these agreeable prophecies. She is a remarkably pretty young creature, with an expressive face and a bright coloration; but she has a most fragile and delicate looking frame. Which is all very consoling, seeing that Marie is an American by birth and education.

—Edison's restless genius has evolved an almost wholly new telephone, which is infinitely more powerful and useful than the first one made, and which Prof. Bell claimed were "approximately equal in power." The chief all possibility of Prof. Bell's further hostility, the Buckeye Boy has taken a new departure in telephonic expression by inventing a simple machine which, hung up

A SUMMER IDYL.

BY HARRIET MABEL SPALDING.

Oh! sweetest days of all the passing year,
When Spring's fair hand is clasped in Summer's own.
And greenly wreathed the woodland ways appear,
Blended with song and roses freshly strewn.
Sweet is the coolness of this frosty shade,
Where coral cups and hidden blossoms grow.
A tender flowers like petals of the snowy glade,
Show how the feet of the petal leaves of snow.
Winding between the purple hills of phlox,
The brooklet ripples on its silver way,
And lo! this pale arbute 'neath the rocks,
Strives to recall the sweetness of the May.
A sunbeam having lost its shining track,
Threading its way the sunlit meadows o'er,
No hand can lure the restless truant back,
Hid now in the lily-cup beside the shore.
And now a sudden fragrance fills the air,
From half-blown buds that wake beneath our feet,
And gazing down, their beauty quaint and rare,
Fills all the air with balm and incense sweet.
How fair is yonder meadow from afar!
One tuft of emerald light, with fold on fold
Of dried buds. How sweet those buds are,
And crocus cups that brim with molten gold!

But now the brightness of the day is spent,
A fresh breeze rising from the cool and fair,
Kissed by the sun's bright edge as though it bent
To kiss the lips of lilies sleeping there.

Only the Summer's hand could crown with flowers,
The budding branches dry and leafless long,
Strew sweetest garlands thru' the passing hours,
And make the woodland blossom into song.

A Great Mistake.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

GLADYS moved about the cheery, sunny room, arranging a vase of fresh May blossoms here, a chalice of hot-house ferns there; adjusting the faded curtains so that the westerly sun-shine fell in on the India matting as through a veil-making a dainty, shimmering shadow of the apple-trees as the wind swayed their blossoming branches.

She was the most strangely beautiful woman Clyde Sardis had ever seen, and as he sat on the piazza outside the French windows, smoking a cigar scarcely less delicately fragrant than the sweet May day, and watching all her graceful movements, every one of which was a poem of itself, he was thinking how ever it happened that this glorious, enchanting creature had become an inmate of his grandfather's house; and wondering, even more surprisedly, that she was still free, that this ravishing beauty and fascination of hers.

He sat quietly in the comfortable bamboo-chair, his handsome blue eyes growing warm and eager as they followed the girl from place to place; and then when she sat down a moment at the open piano and struck a half-dozon preliminary chords before she sang an aria from *Traviata*, he flung away his Reina Victoria, and went in through the window, to meet her luminous eyes as he stopped beside the instrument.

"Don't stop, Miss Saxehurst. You always stop as soon as I come in."

He drooped his handsome head a little nearer her; she laughed, and deliberately arose from the piano-stool.

"Do I really? You know Mrs. Sardis would be very much displeased to hear me sing—for myself."

"And if my august sister-in-law should be guilty of such poor taste—what then?"

Gladys walked slowly toward the open window, where the declining sun shot its almost level rays full into her young face—a face so exquisite in its health and purity and rare beauty that even the searching radiance only added to its charm.

Sardis followed her, with intense reproach in his eyes, she lifted her own to his again, faintly dazzling him with their splendor of rare, rich red-brown light.

"What then? She would gracefully give me my song, Mr. Sardis."

"Would she? Would she, really? Then sing to me, Miss Saxehurst, so I can take you myself."

Gladys laughed.

"How generous you are! And I never had such a delightful position as here at Sunnyleads. Please do not forget I am not independent like—Miss Duncan. I am not that fortunate lady, remember."

"It is not at all likely that I shall forget you are not Miss Duncan," he said, eagerly. "You are a young fair woman, enchanting and beautiful, and she is a fat old woman."

He was looking straight in her face, watching the brief little flush that so seldom disturbed its pale fairness. Even now, she took no notice, apparently, of his intenselessness.

"Well—Miss Duncan is the most favored woman I ever saw. She is rich, and her own mistress, and—"

She hesitated, in her pretty, graceful way.

"And what? I am asked, tenderly."

"That is enough, I am sure," she added, lightly.

"Is it enough, Gladys? Would riches and independence be all the goods of the gods you would ask?"

Since their talk was growing very confidential, somehow, Clyde Sardis was realizing that this woman with the wine-brown eyes and drooping lashes and perfect hands, was creating a delirious, intoxicating havoc in his heart—this exquisite creature whose name was Gladys Saxehurst, and who was a hired servant in his grandfather's homestead—a paid attendant on his elegant, aristocratic sister-in-law's caprices—and this lovely creature fit to be crowned and enthroned.

A quick little light flashed up in her eyes at his words, and then her lids drooped swiftly, letting the long thick lashes lie on her cheeks like a shadow.

"It will not be enough, Gladys—I know that with such a man as you, love should be lord of all such love as I—" Gladys' little mischievous little face suddenly thrust itself in between the lace curtains.

"Please, uncle Clyde, mamma says will you come up to her room? Miss Duncan is there, and they want you."

Somehow, it made a break in the harmony. Somehow, after young Clyde had vanished again, and they two were left standing alone together, the thread of their conversation would not be taken up again, and it was Gladys who dissipated the rather awkward embarrassment of blank silence that fell upon them.

"Happy Miss Duncan!" she said, with a languishing little crimson that showed to perfection her small strong teeth, white as milk, and her exquisite curve of lips, and play of dimples in cheek and chin.

He shrugged his shoulders and went out; and Miss Saxehurst stood several minutes just where he had left her, a grave, thoughtful look coming into her eyes, compressed, almost merciless expression gathering on her firmly-closed lips.

Then, she heard voices from some one descending the stairs, and then Isidore Duncan came down, followed by Mrs. Sardis and Clyde, and Gladys stepped away from where she was, that they might not see her, yet, when her eager, jealous eyes could watch Isidore Duncan's sweet, serious dignity of manner as Clyde Sardis walked beside her to the carriage that had just driven up to the mount, and was in waiting.

Five minutes later, before the carriage was lost to her gaze down the shady turnpike, old Mr. Sardis came in—a fine, handsome, courtly gentleman of sixty, whose eyes lighted at sight of her, as he went across the room to where she stood.

"Well, my little girl! It is within one minute of the time when I said I would come to hear you tell me whether or not you would ac-

cept an old man's love and his name, and his home. Gladys! My darling, is it?"

For she had bewitched him, and—all his magnificence, fortune, his princely home, the grand oil name, the crossable position as his wife and mistress of Sunnyleads, were lying at her feet, to be taken or—not taken.

It was a wonderful streak of fortune, and Gladys had told herself so, over and over, in the twenty-four hours since Mr. Sardis had made his offer of marriage to her.

A wonderful piece of good luck, only—handsome Clyde had been nearer the truth than even Gladys had dared whisper to herself, when he had said that for such as she love should be lord of all.

And—she never could, by any possibility, care for Clyde's grandfather, with all his courtly manliness and his riches and his position, because she loved the grandson, the magnificent young man, who was confidently expected to make love to and marry Isidore Duncan.

And Gladys felt a great, aching pain at her heart that was a strange combination of anger and disappointment and jealousy and misery, as she imagined Clyde and Miss Duncan off riding together in the sweet May sunsetting.

Mr. Sardis gently interrupted her wandering thoughts.

"Well, Gladys! Remember I have been patient for twenty-four hours, and now I want to know how it is to be. Child—can you let me have you for my blessing, my treasure? Can you come to me and love me with all your fresh young heart? Because, unless you can, dear, I would rather you would frankly tell me what will be a sore distress to me."

To be mistress of Sunnyleads. To own the very land and carriage with which Isidore Duncan was riding that night. To rise higher than the haughty woman who paid her shiny dollars a month for services rendered. To have diamonds and signed blank checks—should she If only she could crush down that fierce longing for Clyde Sardis; if only—

"We will be a very pleasant family circle," Mr. Sardis said; "you are aware that Clyde and Isidore will be married in a few months, and unless you come to be my little wife, I shall be very lonely, all to myself."

He sank down in her suddenly swiftly-paling face—and for just one anguishful little minute her breath seemed leaving her lungs, her heart seemed as if grasped in a cruel iron hand, and then—it was over, and she smiled in answer.

"It is because I cannot comprehend why you should want me, Mr. Sardis. If you really do—"

She had no need to finish her sentence, for Mr. Sardis drew her to him in a sudden, glad embrace.

"My own little love! You never, never shall regret this. If ever a woman experienced what I was to be an old man's darling, it shall be you, my Gladys!"

And, after she had escaped to her room, he waked up and down, up and down, with a white-drawn face that would have horrified both of the two men, with her small, fair hands tightly clenched, tried to beat down the fits of jealous longing for Clyde Sardis, with his handsome, eager eyes, and thrilling, passionate voice, and masterful way that had completely conquered her. Once that evening she went up to Mr. Sardis as he sat at an open window—in a pleading little way that was absolutely irresistible.

"Please don't mention our—our engagement will you? It will be unpleasant for me—until I get a little used to it. Wait until I tell you, please!"

He caressed the fingers that lay so lightly and coolly on his—his—her—

"If you wish it so, Gladys. It is fortunate that you spoke so early, for I had fully intended to explain it all to Mrs. Sardis and Isidore Clyde, when they have finished their croquet. It is almost too dusky for them to see, now!"

And, despite the prompt, gentlemanly acquiescence to her whim, Gladys also comprehended he would have preferred it otherwise.

"When they finished their croquet," Mr. Sardis had said; and when they finished, Mrs. Sardis, and Miss Duncan, and Clyde, Jr., went into the brilliantly-lighted parlor where the old gentleman sat—and Clyde went straight to the dusky corner in the adjoining room—the music-room and Mrs. Sardis' favorite parlor—where Gladys sat in a low, wide bamboo rocker, looking out into the starry darkness.

"I will not intrude, Miss Saxehurst," he said, lightly and half-inquiringly, as he went up to her, so near that he could see her ravishingly beautiful face that was even more glorified by the peculiar shadowy light; and then, catching up one of her hands that lay like a lily petal on the arm of the chair, the self-same hand his courtly old grandfather had kissed scarcely an hour before, he drew her to him—up to her, looking out into the starry darkness.

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"Because," he said in quick, passionate whisper that thrilled every nerve in her frame, "I have a love to tell you now. I have been dying of impatience to finish what I would have said this afternoon."

"Gladys! you must love me, you must love me!"

"Will you? Darling, do you?"

Beyond the hopelessness of it, the cruelty of it, seeing that he was engaged to Isidore Duncan, the speechless ecstasy of it all surged like a wave of light and life over her, and—in one just one little moment of weakness, or rather of desperate reckless longing and heart-aching for this handsome pleader who had no more right to speak than she had to listen—Gladys lifted up her face, which had that in it that made him stoop down to kiss her crimson lips, over and over, and hold her close to his breast. Only for one little, little second; and then she broke away from him, laughing, looking out into the starry darkness.

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"I am in a horrible fix certainly," he reflected, gloomily, as he ran up to his room.

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in Mrs. St. Martyn, and all Mrs. St. Martyn's doings, and all Mrs. St. Martyn's friends, but with a sedately sparing of words. Perhaps, it was that she stood a trifle in awe of the proud, brilliant society queen; certainly there was no great intimacy between the two, and the elder lady might not have appreciated how much unexpressed affection Elinor cherished for her.

"I am going to increase my family," Mrs. Allison said, "Elinor, brightly, when she had poured a cup of fragrant tea for her companion.

The person addressed looked as startled, and colored as vividly, as if Mrs. St. Martyn had announced some matrimonial scheme in her behalf.

"My dear?" she said in a tone partly explanatory, partly questioning, that she often used when she spoke.

"Yes, actually," went on Elinor, lightly, reciting Sydney's history and Mr. Trefethen's plans concerning her.

"I am afraid it will be a source of trouble to you," remarked Mrs. Allison with strange precision. "I do not think this raising young persons above their station is to be approved."

"Nor I, ordinarily. But if there is any unpleasant responsibility in this case it will fall on Mr. Trefethen and not on me. Really, I cannot see how the young lady can be a source of trouble to me, aside from superintending her manners and toilettes."

"Well, I hope she will not be, dear. I hope not."

"Mrs. St. Martyn! Mrs. St. Martyn!"

The door was thrown open, and Myra ran in, pale and trembling.

"Mamma is sick! won't you come?"

Elinor hastened up-stairs with the child.

"Where is mamma?" she asked.

"In her room."

"And what made her sick?"

"I don't know. I was telling her about my ride, and the man who spoke to me, and she fell over."

Mrs. St. Martyn found the dark-robed figure of her maid lying senseless upon the floor. But a spray of cologne and an application of salts speedily restored her to consciousness.

"My dear Mamma! Where is she?" she asked in seeming affright, as she opened her eyes.

"Here," said her mistress, soothingly, pushing the child into the mother's arms.

Taylor clasped the little one close to her heart, and kissed her, again and again.

"What is the matter, Taylor?" questioned Mrs. St. Martyn, recalling the young woman fully to herself.

"Only a passing faintness, ma'am. Did Myra call you? She ought not to have done it. It was nothing," she said, hurriedly.

"Certainly you look ill. I shall not want you before evening—the dress can go; I will wear something else—and you must lie down for a few hours," said Mrs. St. Martyn, generally but considerately. "I will send Myra to Mrs. Allison outside."

"Oh, no! No! Myra will be still. Let her stay with me!"

Mrs. St. Martyn looked surprised.

"You are nervous," she said, gravely.

"What has happened?"

"Nothing, ma'am," said Taylor, motioning Myra to go, and striving to appear calm.

Elinor led the little girl out of the room, while the miserable mother buried her face in her pillows, moaning.

"Why did I not tell her the truth? Perhaps she would have pitied rather than blamed me. There is nothing for me to do now but go away."

CHAPTER XII.

FORTUNE—AND ITS CONDITIONS.

Thus her blind sister, fickle fortune, reigns.

And undiscerning scatters crowns and chains.

—POPE.

"GUARDY! Guardy!"

An impetuous rap, then the swift flinging open of the door by the man within, and the almost breathless girl was caught in his strong arms, and her excited cry stifled against his broad shoulder.

"Where is the name of Heaven have you been, child?" he asked, after a minute's hold, holding her from him and regarding her great dilated eyes and hot color, while his own face lost something of its pallor. "I only found a few minutes ago that you had been away all night; and I think I have grown a year older since Helene, you met with no harm?"

"You shall judge, Guardy, dear," she said, brightly, drawing him to his arm-chair, the one luxury his room contained. And kneeling with girlish grace before him, she narrated minutely her map of the long, fatiguing afternoon and advent into the Trefethen mansion.

"And you are sure you were not badly hurt? That you are quite well enough to come away?"

"I had the doctor's permission to come. But, Guardy, I am to go back!"

"Back? Back where, Helene?"

"To Mr. Trefethen's. Don't look so puzzled, Guardy, and so grave, while I am so happy! You will not bid me reject this good fortune, surely?"

Her companion smiled, and drew his hand caressingly across the girl's flushed, beautiful cheeks.

"Dear child, I have no authority to interfere with your life in any way," he answered, gravely. "I have no right to interfere with your life, nor to counsel you against the acceptance of any real good. A thousand times, Helene, I have wished that it was in my power to make existence more bright and beautiful for you," and he looked down with tender eyes into the girl's fair face. "But you have not told me what you mean by your 'good fortune,'"

"Mr. Trefethen has offered to take me as his ward, and care for me as he would for his own daughter, for a year, as a birthday present! There! what do you think of that?"

Her companion regarded her in amazement; and, for a minute, in silence. He loved the girl so well that it hurt him sorely to dampen her high spirits, and spoil her beautiful vision; and yet he could not forbear to ask that the acceptance of such a strange offer would not bring further misery to her than any she had yet known. He understood her ambitious nature, her passionate longings for a home and life above her station, and he felt that for her to spend one year in idleness and luxury, only to be thrust back into sternest poverty and utter friendlessness, would be like thrusting her from Paradise into hell!

"Guardy, you are not glad!" she said, wistfully. "You are not glad! Tell me why?"

She leaned her pretty dimpled chin upon her hand and watched him, with her heart that beat too suddenly for her to quite conceal her anxiety and excitement.

"Little girl, what will you do when that year is up? Could you come back here, contentedly?"

Her face brightened.

"Mr. Trefethen said I was not to worry about that, Guardy. And he wishes to see you, this evening, immediately after his dinner-hour. He said that by that time he should arrange plans concerning my future that he would confide to you."

"And you are to live in his home?"

"Really, I don't know, he is so very odd. But I think not. I wished to be allowed some duties, but he only laughed and said I need not think of being sent to prison so bright a bird in that old cage."

"I have heard of this Mr. Trefethen—that he is enormously rich, and quite eccentric, so perhaps this is not a marvelous whim of his, though it does seem so to me," said the gentleman speculatively. "Can you explain it, Helene?"

"Not fully; but I think he imagined that I looked like some one he knew," answered the girl, ingeniously. "He said I had her name, and that it was a wicked name, and I must change it. Sydney Trefethen he called me—and said it suited me well. Oh, he is very funny! So gallant—like a young man ought to be—one minute, and so quick and cross the next! But you will go and see him?"

"Certainly, Helene. At what hour?"

"I should be sorry to think so. And, now,

"Between seven and eight. And now I must run away—I have so much to do—so much! Some money to collect, my furniture to dispose of, and my things to pack—and all to-day, for Mr. Trefethen is to send for me in the morning."

"Then you are really going away from this poor little place where you have worked and been at home so long? Do you care at all, little girl?"

There was a touch of sadness in the speaker's voice that sent the tears in a hot gush to Helene's sunny blue eyes.

"Care? Of course I care—to leave you! How kind to me you have been! It makes me sick to think how little I have given you. You taught me, 'Oh, Guardy! Guardy! I shall love you just as much, and best of all, wherever I am, and all my life!' and she laid her wet face upon his kindly-clasping hands.

"And yet, for all the girl's passionate outburst of grief she knew only when they were quite separated all that this man was to her."

"That is very kind of you to say," smiling tenderly; "but time brings many changes. I only pray that it may never cause you to forget that in me you will find a true friend, though all others fail you. I am glad that a bright future is opening to you, for the time has come when I, too, must desert this place where I have hoped and toiled."

"How delighted I should be, if those flattering words were true, Helene! But I do hope the foundations of competency and lasting success are laid."

"I know they are!" she said, gayly. "Why, Mr. Trefethen recognized your name the moment I mentioned it. I assure you it was quite an open sesame for me to his faith! And now, Guardy, mind! you must make him promise to-night, to let me repay him in some way for what he proposes to do for me! Don't forget that!" looking back through the half-closed door with an earnest face.

And the maid left alone in his meagre, furnished lodgings, smiling thoughtfully, that the lonely old millionaire must be indeed very bad if he could not be repaid for all he might do for Helene's welfare by an occasional grateful glance from those brave, laughter-filled eyes. Then he wondered whether it was possible that Mr. Trefethen had discovered in the girl's pretty face a clew to a parentage at present unsuspected, and which gave her some legal or moral claim upon him. Could her good fortune be thus accounted for, or had the fickle goddess of the horn of plenty chosen the friendless orphan as a favorite upon whom to lavish strangely bright gifts, in mere whimsicalness? And thus the man reviewed his own life—his dreary, despaired, sorrowful life, with its score of wasted years, and his failure to make his mark in the world. He had been running a race.

"Out with them all—on the emperor's service," cried Olaf, and away went the postmaster as if he were running a race.

"Out with them all ready, harnessed for a troika or tarantass, and the postmaster looked round for the vehicle."

"Take the harness off, Nicolai, and change our saddles," commanded the Dane; and Nicolai, a stalwart Cossack, trained to implicit obedience, followed the order in silence.

"How many more horses, and where are they?"

"Only four, your excellency, and they are out on the fields."

"Send for drivers, these on, Nicolai. We shall want them on the road," was the cool reply, and the Dane set off at a gallop, a few minutes later, driving all of the new lot of horses before him and leaving behind him only the exhausted horses from Psakoff.

As he galloped away, he noticed, not fifty yards from the post-house, another of those same towers, and the lanterns were swinging among the trees in the wildest fashion.

Olaf looked on at a moment and then far ahead. He saw another set of lanterns, up in the air, a few miles further on, and, like the others, these lights were swinging about.

Then it flashed on his mind in a moment that he was being signaled about.

He contrasted the treatment he had received at the post-house with what the emperor's orders led him to expect, and his acute mind at once jumped to the right conclusion. Then, too, he suddenly remembered that he had heard of, although he had never seen, a telegraph.

And if the delay at the post-house arose from the message signaled ahead, the tower in front of him was probably already warned of his coming. What was to be done?

It seemed that they were doomed to a repetition of former delays. But Olaf had not been in the czar's service six hours without learning a few things, and he soon showed his knowledge.

"Who's there, this time of night?" asked a surly voice, inside. "Go away, in God's name, honest people!"

Bang!

Olaf had fired a second pistol through the door, and now he shouted, savagely:

"Open, in the czar's name, fool of a postmaster, or I'll burn your house over your head."

The bullet made a hole through the door, and they heard the postmaster startled from within, and the postmaster did not give way. They heard him shuffle up stairs, howling all the way as if he was in pain, and Olaf realized that the Russian depended on the thickness of his door to defend him from a forcible entry.

"Come, we must give our friend a lesson," he said, to Nicolai.

The Cossack grimed, for he liked nothing better, and the two crowded round the house, till they came to the walled inclosure in the rear, used for stables.

"Here are the horses, excellency," observed the Cossack.

True enough, there were about a dozen horses, lean, scraggy brutes in the corral.

"Why not take them and go, colonel?"

"I've got no colonel to do so, but first I must practise this impudent fellow."

"Then get out of here. Poshti von! Poshti von!" and Olaf began to swing his whip to drive them away. Nicolai unconsciously aided the deception by crying:

"Liar! What are those in the stable?"

"They are all lame, general, sick, blind. Not one is fit to go out. All are at pasture."

"Well, I'll try them, anyway," and the swordmaster was as good as his word; for he rode off at a gallop, a few minutes later, driving all of the new lot of horses before him and leaving behind him only the exhausted horses from Psakoff.

As he galloped away, he noticed, not fifty yards from the post-house, another of those same towers, and the lanterns were swinging among the trees in the wildest fashion.

"Now, station-master," cried Olaf, roughly, "out with all your horses in a hurry. A man who rides with dispatches rides fast. Out with them all quickly, or I will know the reason why."

But the station-master had been warned, and in a moment began to make excuses—with the utmost respect it is true—but still to make excuses.

"Where are the horses?" demanded Olaf, sternly, cutting him short.

"We have none, general; they are all out in the fields."

"Liar. The law obliges you to keep one set always harnessed. Thrash him out, Nicolai."

Nothing loth, Nicolai began to flog the station-keeper, who only danced and howled, while he protested that he was telling the truth.

"Take us to the stables, then."

"Certainly. Your excellency shall see for yourself."

And the man led the way to the stable. Sure enough, it was empty.

"Where are the horses?" asked the swordmaster, and as he spoke he also began to flog the poor Russian, who between Nicolai and Olaf danced and howled in good earnest.

"Where are the horses? Quick!"

Seeing that it was, no use to prevaricate, for the swordmaster and his orderly were beating him so severely that he feared for his life, he desisted.

"Mercy, general! Oh, your excellency, your highness, I will tell. They are out on the plain, but I can call them in with the horn for you. I had to turn them out. Count Stroganoff has them."

"They will do. Nicolai," interrupted Olaf, as he desisted. "Call in your horses quick. So it was Stroganoff's order, was it?"

He said this in a musing tone while the now contrite station-master was getting the horn.

Then the horn blew, and the trampling of hoofs was heard. Up came at least twenty young horses, running at full speed to get their oats.

Olaf laughed for joy to see them.

"Now, Count Stroganoff," he thought, "stop me if you can."

(To be continued—commenced in No. 484.)

same as ever, changing horses as he went, till he came to the next post-house, some twenty miles further.

He did not pause here, for he knew that the horses he had would last him to the next station, and he judged that the loss of time would be more than equivalent to the gain of horses, if he stopped.

The next post-house was only ten miles off, and he changed horses twice on the last stage, riding up to the door with Nicolai on a pair comparatively fresh.

As he came up to the door, three horsemen were there, whose long lances showed that they

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to reach their own homes. A touch on the shoulder brought him about to face the master of the line.

"I hope you are fresh yet, Shields. Here are a couple of flats I want you to take on to Chestertown to-night. They are ready here on the side track."

Not quite ready it would appear, for two or three heavy kegs were trundled past them where they stood, and loaded on under the roadmaster's supervision. The engineer received his instructions, and proceeded to hook on the caboose and engine; Dana sprang up and yanked his leather from the doorway of the former, and it was not until the train was under headway that he discovered two of the laden kegs still in the compartment.

"What are you doing here?" he demanded, with sudden foreboding as he recognized them. "Hold easy, Shields. Keep a civil tongue if you know what's good for yourself. You're no better man than we are, and we don't propose to see you a-rolling in luck and us at the foot of the heap. We're going to make a stroke for ourselves, and you've got to help us whether you like it or not. What's in them kegs you've got aboard?"

"Spikes, I daresay, but I don't know."

"Well, I do. It's specie for the month's pay along the line, and the vice-president is on the look-out for it at Chestertown, but it'll never get there. You'll drop us and it a dozen miles this side."

The two dark, sinister faces turned upon him were answer enough, without the appearance of a revolver simultaneously in the hands of each.

"We won't stand no fooling, Jake and me. You're in the scrape, and may as well make the best of it. We depend on you to manage the engineer, and give us time for a start before you get into Chestertown—an hour's as much as we ask. If we're took, your frien's and the company shall know it's a State's prison bird that've been making so much of."

Dana flushed. "All right with me with the company in any case," he said.

"Then come in with us," urged the man. "We never go back on a pal. What's that for?" suspiciously, as Dana leaned out to signal with his light.

He made no answer, but turned in a moment, the signs of a struggle in his working face.

"'Tis with you, Sir, you give me no choice," he announced, and left the caboose to make his way to the engine. A jerking motion of the train showed him that the speed had been increased, and it was not without peril that he sprang across the couplings to the tender.

"Better that I should go under the wheels than aid in their purpose," he muttered, between his set teeth, and in another moment he had cut off the train.

"You signaled more speed," said the engineer, as he entered the cab. "What for? We were faster than regulation time, as it was."

"The couplings have parted," Dana explained. "Keep well ahead."

It was a necessary caution. A steep downgrade of four miles lay ahead of them, and at the end of it was the river, spanned by a trestle-work sixty rods long.

The glaring headlight of the engine flashed over the surrounding landscape; the pursuing train, too, after increasing its speed, and the caboose, having no weight to hold it down, began to jump the rails and bounce back upon them with terrific jars.

"If them fellows don't put on the brakes, they'll go into the river as sure as fate," said the engineer, and not being railroad men the catastrophe overtook them.

The engine slowed as it neared the bridge and passed over in safety, but the caboose leaped clear off the rails and turned completely over before it struck the water and sunk beneath it, while the loaded flat-cars following, kept the track and came to a stand on the other side.

An inquiry was held upon the bodies of the two drivers and conductors, but the affair was adjudged an accident with no blame attaching to any one, and Dana Shields alone knew of the loss which had threatened the company, or of the dangerous expedient by which he had saved it and himself.

Captain Dick Talbot, KING OF THE ROAD;

OR,

The Black-hoods of Shasta.

A wild story of life in the Cinnabar Valley; of the men who tell—the men who rob—and the men who kill; of the hanged and the hunters; weird as the plines of the wild Western land, strange men who people the hills and valleys over which great

Shasta rules.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "OVERLAND KIT," "ROCKY MOUNTAIN ROB," "KENTUCK, THE SPORT," ETC.

CHAPTER XXV.

MEN WHO WERE NOT EXPECTED.

The ambuscade had been chosen with excellent judgment. The trail at this point traversed a small prairie, dotted here and there with clumps of timber, around and among which the road ran, and although, in addition to the driver, who, as we have stated, was fairly bristling with weapons, the best deputy the sheriff boasted sat on the box with a breech-loading rifle laid across his lap, his fingers on the trigger.

A due precaution seemed to be taken against a surprise, but what could be done to do, even one as well versed in the customs of the mountain region as the sheriff's deputy, when he realized how completely he was entrapped.

He sank back in his seat and cursed his ill-luck. The prisoner laughed as he watched the expression upon the face of the burly official.

"Well, you won't be surprised when I won't ride to Yerka with you," he said, quietly.

"Durn the luck!" the sheriff cried. "Again you've played best trump."

"A chance for you to carry out the Governor's order now," Cherokee suggested.

"I reckon that my life is worth as much to me as anybody else's life, and I ain't anxious to cash my checks yet. The trick is yours, pardner, and I pass." And with the word he unfastened the lariat which bound him to the prisoner. "Oh, no! I was to go for you, I covered" the official with a cocked rifle, and at the same moment another masked man appeared on the right, one directly ahead and two in the rear.

Against such a force it was madness to offer resistance and the sheriff fairly groaned when he realized how completely he was entrapped.

He sank back in his seat and cursed his ill-luck. The prisoner laughed as he watched the expression upon the face of the burly official.

"Well, you won't be surprised when I won't ride to Yerka with you," he said, quietly.

"Durn the luck!" the sheriff cried. "Again you've played best trump."

CHAPTER XXVI.

CIRCUMSTANCES ALTER.

"The fact is, young man, we've stole your trick and the game is ours!" exclaimed another one of the road-agents, in tones only too well known to the prisoner, and when he had finished the speech the man removed the black hood which he wore and revealed the strongly-marked features of Brockford, the postmaster.

Cherokee realized at once that he was in a position of great danger. He understood now that the men were, with the patches of court-plaster on their faces, who had taken up the postmaster's quarrel with the Bella Union girl, to whom he had given the Black-hoods.

"We've taken care of yourself," and the prisoner moved to rise, but a sudden thought checked him.

"By the by, just have the kindness to unlock these playthings, will you?" and he held up his wrists encircled by the steel bracelets as he spoke.

"Of course; anything to oblige," replied Dancer, with a grimace, and at once he produced the key and unlocked the handcuffs.

"And now my weapons, please. I'm sorry that I can't stay longer, but I cannot be always with you, you know."

With another wry face the sheriff presented Cherokee with the elegant tools which had so often stood him in good need.

"The tale ends of itself. See you again some time, and, sheriff, I won't be hard on you for your share in this night's work for you have only done your duty, but for the others—well, when you get back to Cinnabar, just give my compliments to both the postmaster and the Governor, and tell them that I owe

them one, and that they may rest easy that I shall settle the obligation, for no man in the Shasta area has ever been forced to crawl out of paying his debts, whether the quittance was due in either coin or blood."

The quiet, determined tone fairly made the burly sheriff shiver, and mentally he thanked his lucky stars that he did not stand in the shoes of either Brockford or the Governor.

"So-long!" ejaculated Cherokee, thrusting his weapons into their pockets, opening the door of the coach and jumping out onto the moonlit ground.

"Drive on!" cried a hoarse voice, the leader of the masked men speaking; and the command was obeyed at once.

Out went the coach at its best speed, the driver applying the lash to the restive animals, and Cherokee, alarmed by the strange voice, glaring around him, with a look of fear in his eyes, discovered that he was in the hands of the Black-hoods.

No pals of Injun Dick had come to his rescue, but, on the contrary, the band of strangely-dismised men who had made a powerful name for themselves by wild and lawless deeds amid the hills of Shasta.

The coach went on a hundred yards or more, and then making a circle to the right, wheeled around and took the back trail toward Cinnabar.

For once in his life, at any rate, if never before, the bold Cherokee had been taken entirely by surprise. He had been sure when the coach had been stopped that it was through the kindly devices of ardent love, but when he looked around him and saw that he was surrounded by the road-agent gang, the Black-hoods of Shasta, he began to ask himself if he hadn't jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire.

The coach had disappeared in the distance, and the road-agents, still with leveled weapons in their hands, began to close in upon him.

If the strangers were friends they came in a very unfriendly fashion, and Cherokee, always a firm believer in the idea that the best way to meet danger was with a bold front, pulled out his revolvers and prepared to stand upon the defense.

The highwaymen at once perceived the design, and their leader called out:

"I reckon that I can try," Cherokee replied, decisively.

"We are five to one! If you are wise, you will throw down your weapons and surrender."

"Not by a jugful," was the answer. "I don't know what you want with me, but I'm going to find out before I allow you to come any nearer. You're all within range now, and I give you fair warning that I shall plug some of you if you advance."

"We are friends."

"Prove it by putting up your weapons."

"I reckon we prove it by rescuing you from the sheriff!"

Cherokee pricked up his ears at this question. How did they know who was in the coach?

"Why did you interfere in this matter? What is your little game?" he demanded.

"Well, we want just such a man as you."

"Yes; and since you have fallen out with the law, why you had better fall in with us."

Cherokee had had an idea, when he first heard the voice of the speaker, that the man was no stranger to him, for his ears were wonderfully correct in this way, and the more he heard of the voice the more certain he became that his suspicion was not without foundation.

"I'm very much obliged to you for your offer, but I say the public is to work the world, not myself."

"Oh, you wrong yourself, I am sure, and we are quite willing to run the risk," the outlaw replied. "Come, say that you will join us, and you shall have a good position in the band. Remember that we have just saved you from the hangman's rope."

"Ah! I'm not so sure of that," Cherokee replied quickly. "There's many a slip between the cup and the lip, and to my thinking the chances are ten to one that I would have slipped through the hands of the sheriff between Yreka and Sacramento—that is, supposing that my worthy friend the sheriff had ever succeeded in getting me to Yreka, and I have serious doubts in regard to that."

"Mebbe you could have fooled the sheriff, but you can't fool us," the outlaw retorted. "We know all about you, Mister Dick Talbot; we know how you offered to buy your pardon from the Governor by hunting us down, and now that we have got you foul we intend that you shall either join our band or else we'll put you where you won't trouble anybody any more, in this world."

Following close behind the coach, awaiting a favorable opportunity to attempt a rescue, they were alarmed by the approach of Brockford and his gang, and, concealing themselves by the roadside, allowed the others to pass. They suspected that an assault on the prisoner was intended, for Bowers had a shrewd suspicion that Brockford was in some way connected either with them or with some other band of outlaws; he had formed a bad opinion of the postmaster.

And so, being fully warned, the pair had withdrawn to a black-hooded corner and taken advantage of a favorable chance to advance Cherokee's rescue.

The sudden parting of the lariat caused the ball from the Indian's rifle, had dropped Cherokee all in a heap to the ground, and by the time he had got upon his feet again, the road-agents were in full flight, and his friends in full possession of the field.

Mud-turtle hastened to cut the lariat that bound Cherokee's hands, while Bowers, as was his wont, commenced to brag of the feat which had been performed.

"Tell you, my noble dook! that war a mighty fine trick!" he exclaimed. "Never in all time did I see pilgrims like these hyer git up and doot quick."

And then, in answer to Cherokee's question, Bowers explained how it happened that they had come so aptly to his rescue, and he in turn was astonished when informed by Cherokee that Brockford was the chief of the Black-hoods.

"And henceforth," continued Cherokee, "it will be our task to hunt these Black-hoods down. Mud-turtle, you must keep a watch upon the postmaster, and track him to the secret haunts of the Black-hoods among the hills. Brockford, of course, will return to the town and pursue his course as usual, although he knows I am aware that I am in the hands of the road-agent gang, but he will rely upon the fact that so long as this accusation is hanging over me I shall not be able to show my face in Cinnabar; but if I can't go there as Cherokee, I can as well."

"Stand up, Walter," she said, softly. "I want to speak to you."

I had to obey her whether I wanted to or not, and she pointed out the boat, rapidly vanishing in the distance.

"There he goes, Walter, your friend, my lover. Bring him back to me, or I shall die. Let me say to you, Walter, that nothing, nothing, remember, must come between you and John Fisher."

"I'll do my best," I said. "But you know, Milly, how hard it will be."

The ship sailed and we in her. For awhile I had a hard fight to meet my old friend, but he was so frank and free, so unsuspecting of evil, that I couldn't find it in my heart to keep it hardened against him. Yet there were times when, in spite of myself, the thought crossed my mind that if he were to die I might win Milly yet.

But the days went on and still we headed to the south to round the stormy Cape. Jack began to see something of change in me, God knows I didn't mean to let him see it, and somehow a coldness crept into our intercourse. I can't tell how. And yet, it drove me half-mad, sometimes, to think that woman's face should part us, and I fought a hard fight with the evil in my own heart.

One night after we had run down Terra del Fuego, and had the Cape under our lee, there came a time which tried me as I was never tried before. I stood standing on the rail, looking ahead, when I heard a snapping sound, and saw Jack Fisher falling from the forecastle.

How he came to fall I don't know, but a surer-footed sailor never trod a foot-rope, but something had partied aloft, and down he came. Lucky for him it was that as he fell she heeled over or he would have dropped to the deck crushed out of the image of humanity there.

As he fell into the sea under my very eyes, and I only saw him fall, I only saw him fall.

My hour of temptation had come, mates. I had only to stand there and see him go out of sight forever in the deep-blue waters, for he was stoned by the fall, and going down like a stone. It was only for a moment the devil held me fast, and then the face of Milly, as I saw it last, floated before me; an' my spirit was set free.

"Man overboard!" I yelled. "Bring the ship to."

And I went down head-first into the boiling water under the stern, and as I tread water and looked about me I caught a glimpse of his pale face and staring eyes as he went down for the last time. In a moment more I was after him, and when I rose again I was bearing up the senseless form of my best friend, and had gotten all except my love for him.

The ship went on while my cries sounded across the dark water, and a dozen heads appeared above the rail. Then the sailors shivered, and I heard the creaking of the davits as a boat dropped into the water.

Would they be in time?

But the body of Jack Fisher resting like a lump of lead upon my arm, and seemed to bear me down. I struggled hard, desperately, with my eyes fixed upon the coming boat, but at every moment I sunk lower and lower, and it was as much as I could do to keep his head above the waves. I'm glad to think at this day, that I didn't give one thought to myself, only I wanted to save Milly. But the boat did not reach me; a blue seemed to come before my eyes, an' then I knew no more until my eyes opened upon the deck of the old whaler, and I knew that I was safe.

"Jack?" I whispered to the man who bent over me.

"All right; you saved him!"

"Thank God!"

Then I knew no more for three days, and when I came to myself I was lying in his bunk, and he was watching over me. I've had some good and bad luck since that time, but never shall I know so much joy as I did when I knew that I had saved him for Milly. They've been married nine years now, and have children growing up, and they say that when this old hulk is too weather-worn to continue longer, I must run into port with them. But I think I'll end my life upon the sea an' be buried under the waves I've loved so long. I think she'll be sorry—who knows?

And the old salt was silent, and a hush fell upon the crew in the fo'ksel.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 481.)

The Sailor's Temptation.

BY C. D. CLARK.

TO ADVERT

MARRIED TOO YOUNG.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

My wife she was a beauteous thing,
And it need not be told
That when I wed I wed for love—
She married me for gold.
I'd pass'd my twenty years of youth
And settled down some,
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

I only had been wed three times
And this was but the fourth—
The happiest marriage did I think
E'er made upon the earth.
Our ages were remarkable,
A boy a happy mean,
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

My head might lack a hair or two
Perhaps, of being bald.
A tooth or two, I'm sure, saved me
From being toothless called.
My head was sure to wise age,
A boy a happy mean,
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

It was a fashionable match,
As everybody said—
She need not think that other girls
Would turn her husband's head;
Indeed this amazing fact I know
But still they should see
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

That she would ne'er grow old to me
She ought have surely known,
Also because I'm somewhat lame
From her I'd ne'er have flown.
Her people were proud of me,
As well they should see
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

But ah, my wife was young and vain
While I was old and wise—
More than a father unto her
Lame all the name implies.
"Great at last we're married," said she,
With a loud and haughty mien—
Though I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

She got to calling me "old man,"
Which I thought very rude;
To wear a cap and dress in gray,
Indeed she never would.
She wanted to be vain and gay,
And she was seventeen,
Though I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

She had a very foolish head,
And I could plainly see,
Through somewhat blind, that she did not
Her idol make of me.
She ran off with another man!
Was a such shame seen?
And he is only twenty-three!
And she is seventeen.

I know my heart would break to-day
Were it not old and tough:
Why shu a young man should prefer
To me is strange enough.
The fault is she was far too young
To fit in with me,
To wed again at seventy-five
A wife of, say—nineteen!

The Condor-Killers;
OR,
WILD ADVENTURES AT THE EQUATOR.BY T. C. HARBAUGH,
AUTHOR OF "SNOW-SHOE TOM," ETC.

VI.

THE STRANGE TRAP IS SPRUNG—JACK'S FIRST

HAVING divested the cow's carcass of the skin, Elgardo cut off a great hunk of flesh which he covered with his skin and then assisted by the boy Nimmers, who were still at a loss to conjecture how he was going to catch a condor, he rolled the body to a cliff near at hand and dropped it into a valley far below. This valley was covered with a growth of prickly bushes into whose depths the condor would not venture after the daintiest morsel; and the Peruvian boy, smiling at the wonder depicted upon the faces of his companions, returned to the hide.

As he did so, he looked up and with a cry of "el condor" startled our young friends. But strain their eyes as they would, they could see nothing but the tops of skies. Not a cloud was in sight, much less the dark pinions of the vulture king of the Cordillera.

Getting to his singular task again, Elgardo carried the hide into a large open place. To the fleshy side he fastened the pieces of meat with cords made from the sinews of the llama and huancan, and having concealed Nicholas and Jack at a spot from which they could see the trap and not be seen in return by the peerless eyes of the condor, the ingenious boy went back to the device, and with a smile of self-satisfaction, crept under the skin!

"Catching a condor with a cow-skin will prove as successful as catching a sly old bird with clay!" said the incredulous Jack, in low tones to his companion.

"I am not willing to confirm your judgment, Jack" was the reply.

"You'll confirm it presently and help me laugh at Elgardo's wild scheme. A fellow who would stick to a tree and grapple with a jaguar single-handed would be the very chap to attempt to catch a gigantic bird, and one of the shrewdest of the feathered family, with such a ludicrous device as he has fixed up."

Nicholas, the student, did not reply. He had more confidence in Elgardo's condor-trap, though he could not see how the boy would secure his prize.

In seeking food the condor depends almost entirely on his keenness of vision. From his station in mid-air, even beyond the sight of the Cordilleran hunter, he notes a carcass and at once descends. His sense of smell is very poor; a piece of raw meat wrapped in a paper and placed before him will not attract his attention.

Our impatient friends did not have to wait long for the appearance of the great bird of prey. A finger laid on Jack's arm told him that the quick eye of Nicholas had detected the condor, and a glance upward showed him the great bird descending slowly. Nearer and nearer, in concentric circles, came the condor, and at last his talons clutched into the flesh that crowned the hide. Then he fell at once to gorging himself, tearing the meat and devouring it with disgusting rapidity, until Jack expressed his wonderment at Elgardo's inactivity.

"Ha! ha!" laughed the boy. "My little Peruvian is caught in his own trap. He is afraid of the bird he has called from the skies. The condor has caught the boy, not the bird the condor. There is the best shot I shall ever get at the air-king!" and the speaker seized his rifle; but the hand of his companion was laid upon it.

"No, Jack. We must not offend Elgardo. You forget that we owe him our lives. Think of the jaguar last night. My word for it that he is not lying innocently beneath the skin, for a minute since I saw a hand rise from beneath it, and it was mine."

"A rope?" I did not see it. What can the boy be doing?"

"We must wait. What! another condor? That is one more than the boy has bargained for."

Sure enough a second condor pounced upon the meat, and speedily fell to devouring it. The twain did not fight for the spoils; but side by side tore the flesh which already beneath the warm rays of the sun was becoming putrid. To our young adventurers the sight before them was exciting, and it was with difficulty, notwithstanding his late words, that Nicholas could prevent his young friend from firing at the birds.

At a new scene was about to burst upon their vision.

The trap was about to be sprung; and all at once Elgardo shot from beneath the skin with a

loud cry, and turning toward our friends called them forth.

The eager boys did not waste time in obeying the summons, and as they leaped from the retreat, the condors attempted to escape.

Elgardo said:

Jack now saw that Elgardo had not remained idle during his sojourn under the skin, nor had he wished to leave it before he did.

The birds, uttering their peculiar cries, continued to attempt flight; but a number of strong cords had been tied about their legs while they were gorging themselves. These cords were also fastened to the heavy and unwieldy hide, which they could not tie as they were, carry alight.

For many moments the trio enjoyed, to a certain degree, the struggles of the gigantic birds.

"Cow-skin catch condor after all, eh?" cried Elgardo, turning a look of triumph upon Jack.

"It is with the Condor," he said, "as with the many hundred in a year. Sometimes when he wants to kill many at once, he kills a mule and puts the carcass on the edge of a pit, so balanced that it will easily fall over. Pretty soon the sky is black with the great birds, and down they pounce upon it. Then by fighting over the meat, they draw it over the edge and it falls down into the pit. Not willing to lose it they follow it down and gorge themselves so that they cannot rise. Then come the people, and with stones and clubs they put the birds to death. So, señores, you see we have many traps for the condor. This is but one of them. Now I will bolo a one."

Sayings Elgardo drew forth his bolo—that indispensable companion of the Indians of Peru—and took the lighter ball in his hand. Then for a moment he swung the other two in a wide circle over his head, and suddenly sent the strange weapon forward. A moment later the aim told, for the weapon encompassed the neck of one of the condors and after a few struggles the great wings grew still, and the bird dropped upon the hide.

"Now, my boy," said Elgardo, turning to Jack, "you shall slay your first condor."

"But I'd rather not shoot a captive. Can't you unloose him?"

The Peruvian boy smiled.

"Well see, little señor," he said, and drawing his knife, he stepped toward the remaining bird.

When at a distance of twenty feet from him, Elgardo halted, and seizing the glittering blade at the point drew his right arm back.

"Ready?" he said, glancing over his shoulder.

Jack cocked his rifle and fixed his sparkling eyes on the monarch of the mountains.

Elgardo stood for a moment with the knife drawn back, and then sent it whizzing forward. A loud shout of applause from Nicholas attested the success of the throw. The North American Indian could not have thrown his tomahawk with greater precision, for the knife had cut the cord that prevented the condor's flight, and as it was the last bird to the feast, and consequently not so gorged as its companion, it rose at once into the air.

Up, up went the condor! Jack, though covering it, did not fire.

"Quick!" cried Nicholas, sharing the excitement of the moment.

"Quick, señor, or el condor will escape."

But the young hunter did not touch the trigger until the noble bird had been given a fair chance for life. Then a loud report burst upon the ears of all, and the vulture-king fell over and began to descend.

"Hurrah!" shouted Nicholas, carried away with enthusiasm. "A shot good enough to invade a Berlin's army."

"It hit him in the head; wait and see!" replied Jack in calm triumph.

A moment later the condor reached the ground, and Elgardo and Nicholas were surprised to see the boy's words confirmed: the bullet had passed through the brain of the bird!

Not a little pleased with their adventure, the trio left the spot and continued their journey toward Albosso's hut. Jack carried away several wing feathers of the bird as souvenirs of his first condor.

By Elgardo's guidance the hut was reached at the close of day; but not a living object greeted them. The absence of the pet puma was remarked by the Peruvian boy; but a surprising gratification awaited them.

Upon entering the hut, they found everything that belonged to Jack and Nicholas standing in the center of the room.

"Some one has been here!" cried Nicholas.

"Albosso!" said Elgardo. "See! he has taken only his own property. If the volcano has unsettled his mind, it has also frightened him from this country. He will never return. We will find his mule gone."

An examination revealed this: the Condor-hunter's beast was missing, while those belonging to the trio remained behind.

For a minute the three gazed into each other's faces.

"What is to be done now, señores?" asked Elgardo. "I know the paths that lead to Lima," and the Peruvian boy executed a courteous bow.

"To Lima!" echoed Jack. "Who wants to go back now? Do you know the Amazonian valley?"

"Miss Delly! Oh, Miss Delly!" whispered a scared voice.

"Well?"

"Whatever in the world can be the matter with your father?"

"Explain, please, Ruth."

"Oh, why, I didn't know he was a somnambulist."

"A somnambulist!" both exclaimed.

"Sh! Sh! Just come this way. Don't make any noise." And when we had silently stepped around the sword to the rear of the house she said: "Look! Look there!"

At the edge of the vine-clad arbor, half-ghostly in the moonlight, a form was crouching and digging. It was Mr. Montello in stocking feet and dressing-gown.

"He did the same last night, Miss Delly," declared the maid, in a hushed voice: "and when Mr. Harman went away, I saw him come around to the front and go all over the porch as if hunting for something. Whatever does it mean to you? I am real scared about him."

The two were mystified. It was not, if at least possessed a reason able stock of perception. The ghostly figure soon reentered the house. I strode forward followed by the others, and in a few seconds we had unearthed—two packages of bonds, \$5,000 in each, contained in a stout tin, keyless box.

"Ah!" exclaimed Delora, "I see how it is. Father is a somnambulist—though, very strangely, I never knew it—and has been robbing his son of his savings."

"Do not speak of this in any way. Let the money remain there," I admonished. Oblige me, for I have a great object."

"They promised. As I hurried homeward, I missed—"

"Somnambulist, indeed! I recall, now, his words to Delora: 'Wait until we know some things more about this Edlyn Harman.' The mean old sinner! I did not think him vile as that. Well, we shall see, Mr. Montello."

A third note came to the office next A.M., announcing an additional loss of \$5,000 in bonds drawn from deposit and intended for market.

A second reward, aggregating \$2,000, was now offered, and again was suspicion thrown on me as being present that night.

"Well, I was present!" I exclaimed, and proceeded to relate all I had seen, naming my witness.

My superiors were now quick to coincide with my conclusions: that Guy Montello was striving to cast odium upon me as an excuse to break off my engagement with his daughter. Their reply to his note was simply:

"We have found the culprit, to a certainty!"

The chief and I visited Montello Cottage during the afternoon, and for the first time I displayed my badge of office.

"You have been barking up the wrong tree, Mr. Montello," said my chief. "The very party whom you suspected has hunted down the true thief. A word in your private library, please."

It was a singular interview, and developed

wearing a badge of authority, and in my ears rung the serious injunction:

"Now, see if you can prove yourself valuable."

"I had never struck me that I was cut out for the rôle of a detective; but I was in the business, and no mistake, waiting for an opportunity to display my talent, if I had any."

This evening I had entered the parlor of Guy Montello, the broker, unannounced—a habit not unusual after my betrothal with Delora—and the first thing I heard, issuing distinctly from the adjoining room, was the beat of conversation.

"Presently Delora came in. She greeted me with the accustomed smile and kiss. But I could observe that she was ill at ease. She must have known that I overheard her father's speech, but no illusion was made to it. At ten o'clock I took my departure."

Crossing the threshold, I caught something which slipped and escaped ahead of me. A pocket-book!—too, too! Belonging to Mr. Montello, perhaps. I half-turned to inquire as to its ownership; but the shutters were already closed, and it would be useless to disturb the inmates of the house by sounding the door-bell at that late hour. Next time I called would answer.

Imagine my astonishment when, the following morning, the head of our department placed in my hands the following epistle:

"MESSRS. BLANKEs—*Detectors.*

"GENTLEMEN:

"I have to announce to you the loss, on last night, of a pocket-book containing \$1,000. It was lying on my desk in a room out of the parlor. No one has been to my room or been near the pocket-book except a young man of the city, by name, Eldyn Harman. While I have reason to suspect, I have not sufficient ground for accusation. The matter is placed in your hands. If you desire further particulars, call at my office, No.—Exchange Place."

"REPECTFULLY,"

"GUY MONTELLO."

"What does it mean?" asked the chief.

"Mean?"—I was crimson to the temples.

"Why, here is the pocket-book. I found it on the porch when leaving, late last night, and intended to return it to-night."

"Were you with Mr. Montello in his private room?"

"No."

"Whom did you see there?"

"Again I flushed; but replied:

"It is necessary for me to state that Miss Montello and myself are betrothed. My visits there are not made at night."

"Oh! And were you with her every minute of your stay?"

"Yes, every minute," as I am sure she will inform you if required.

At this juncture a messenger appeared, bearing a missive. It was another note from Mr. Montello, dated at his residence, York Road, and ran as follows:

"GENTLEMEN:

"Since my last communication to you, I have suffered another loss, \$5,000, in U.S. bonds are missing from the safe deposited in the bank. The bonds were stolen, and had passed them in view of a negotiation for to-day. If we can find the party who took the pocket-book, we will, doubtless, strike the trail of the bonds. \$1,000 reward."

"GUY MONTELLO."

Our chief gave vent to a whistle. This looked like rushing vent. He gazed keenly at me, tapping thoughtfully on the table with the pocket-book which I had promptly handed to him.</p